

CINEMA

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Papers

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AUSTRALIAN FILMS:
the road ahead

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A comprehensive round-up of film,
television and miniseries
activity in 1987

Cover: Stephen Sommers in *White Deer Farm*



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THIS CANBES ISSUE of *Cinema Papers* goes to press with a number of crucial questions about the future of the Australian film industry still unresolved.

The most immediately pressing of these is, of course, the means by which money can be raised to enable films to be made. In the climate of uncertainty about the industry's future, production has slowed down, as can be seen from our production survey. In 1987, as our production histogram shows, 43 feature films, 12 documentaries and 35 television series were made, with a total budget of almost \$200 million. This includes features like *East Angels* and *Crocodile Dundee II*, whose progress will be anxiously monitored throughout the industry.

Nevertheless, 28 Australian films will be seen at Cannes this year, only slightly fewer than the 1987 total. Of these 1987 films, the subsequent success story was undoubtedly *Travelling North: High Tide*, despite strong performances and enthusiastic reviews, did not make an impression at the box office, and several local films that received a limited release — *There Dear Departed*, *State Wym & Me* and *Premonition's Forest*, for example — came and went with alarming speed. The star of the 1987 AFI Awards, *The Year My Voice Broke*, was originally part of a television package, and not intended for theatrical release.

This year at Cannes several Australian

films have been singled out. The Australian-New Zealand co-production, *The Navigator*, has been selected for competition, as has Maggie Pucke's animated short *Plumtree Down*. (Interview with the directors of both films appear in this issue.) Marlene Bennett's short, *A Song Of Air* (reviewed in *Cinema Papers* 46), will be seen in 'Un Certain Regard'.

While filmmakers complained about the uncertainty that dogged this financing, a very different kind of uncertainty has been evident in the television industry — the difficulty in keeping track of who owns what this week. In this edition, Liz Fell sets out the details of the networks' buying frenzy, a *Monopoly* game that still isn't over. The degree of concentration in media ownership is a crucial question for the future of the film and television industry in Australia, as is the related issue of Australian content. *Cinema Papers* plans to cover these matters in forthcoming editions.

Finally, how are Australian films reviewed? In this issue, the reviewers of *The Men From Snowy River II*, *The Breaking Secret Family* and *Warm Nights On A Silver-Moving Train* consider how these films have been received and viewed critically in this country. For the producers of this next phase of Australian filmmaking, it is vital to have rigorous, committed, imaginative analysis.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT FUND: FIRST ASSESSMENT OF 1988

Total funding of \$490,584 was approved by the Australian Film Commission for 28 projects.

Western Australia

Ben Elston: *And Deserts* (\$2,500)
Steven Peddie: *Awak Daylong* (\$1,500)

Northern Territory

Mark Barker, Rhonda Foster: *Excerpt For Oliver Alone* (\$50,700)

New South Wales

Liz Aronson: *Make My Day* (\$7,600)
Suzanne Cooper: *Unfaded Love Story* (\$14,100)
Mark Dawson, Penny Palmer: *Out To Lunch* (\$5,240)
Betsy Elston: *Broadcasting The Lock* (\$16,500)
John Evan Hughes: *Raft Of The Medusa* (\$64,700)
Carla Levy: *Tour De Force* (\$49,400)

Victoria

Lindsay Christopherson: *The Avowed* (\$37,610)
Anna Kornmeier: *Pondle Swamp* (\$12,650)
Michael Lee: *Parables Of The Cross* (\$1,665)
Brian McKinnon: *Coburg* (\$74,974)
Bill Moosman: *After School* (\$18,365)
Peter Tennant: *At Last, The Amazing News Film* (\$34,700)
David Tiler, Paul Brown, Johnson: *Unfaded* (\$42,000)
Philip Tyndale: *In Lands Of Strangers* (\$3,000)
Dennis Tupperoff: *The Bear* (\$35,320)
Chris Windmill, Anne-Marie Crawford: *Personal Job* (\$2,620)

South Australia

Rick Corrigan, Chris Williams: *Son Of Averno* (\$2,500)
Margaret Hargrave: *Tremorstruck* (\$1,500)

ST KILDA FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS

Contributors of Merit

- *Running The Town* — Trevor Graham
- *Peepholes's Letter* — Murray Bartley, music
- *Pelicans* — Laurie Melbourne, cinematography
- *Fully Outrigger Men At* — Film Australia
- *Midday News* — Sharon Laara
- *Longford Cinema Award: Plumtree Down* — Maggie Pucke

- Kodak Award for Cinematography: *With Love To The Person Next To Me* — Ray Argall
- Illustration Film Prize: *Australian Summer* — Megan Sargison
- Australian Film Theatre Prize for Screenplay: *Desire As Desired* — Wendy Thompson
- Cinema Prize: *A Cowen* — Anne Alper
- Mayor's Prize: *Cherish* — Film Australia
- City of St Kilda Prize: *A Song Of Air* — Marlene Bennett

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AFL Exhibition thanks the Film and Television Institute (W.A.), the State Film Centre of Victoria, the South Australian Motion Picture Centre, Electric Shadows, Canberra and the Danish Film Society for their assistance in presenting AFL National tours.

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AUSTRALIAN FILM INSTITUTE



Selma Schatz in an animated film in production by Gabriela Schatz

Selma Schatz's short animated film *Elephant Theatre* won the Top German Award in the 1987 Ann Arbor Film Festival in Michigan. Schatz says that after much preparation, writing, drawing, painting, measuring, calculating, the idea for the film emerged: One man has built a little

theatre which he can hold in the palm of his hand. It reveals a world of its own. Yet there remains one dream to be fulfilled that some elephants will come to live in it.

She is currently producing, directing and animating *Antikörper*, a satirically

COMPETITION RESULTS

We had a good response to our *This Is The Big Easy Derby* competition, in which readers had a chance to win a copy of Jim McBride's *The Big Easy*, courtesy of Seven Keys. Our three winners are L. Hanes, Diana Brown and Ross Peters.

The answer to the question, "What is the name of Dennis Quaid's brother who appears in *The Big Easy*?" is of course Buddy Quaid, who plays Justin in the film. Buddy Quaid, Dennis's actor brother, does not make an appearance, but numerous contestants pointed him to might have. A small consolation prize is on its way to unsuccessful entrants.

THE 1988 ACADEMY AWARDS

- Best picture: *The Last Emperor*
- Best director: Bernardo Bertolucci (*The Last Emperor*)
- Best actress: Cher (*Moonstruck*)
- Best actor: Michael Douglas (*Wall Street*)
- Best supporting actress: Olympia Dukakis (*Moonstruck*)
- Best supporting actor: Sean Connery (*The Untouchables*)
- Best original screenplay: John Patrick Shanley (*Moonstruck*)
- Best screenplay from another source: Mark Feltner and Bernardo Bertolucci (*The Last Emperor*)
- Best foreign language film: *Babette's Feast* (Denmark)
- Best editing: Catherine Chisholm (*The Last Emperor*)
- Best make-up: Rick Baker (*Warrior And The Windmills*)
- Best original score: Ryuichi Sakamoto, David Byrne, Cong Su (*The Last Emperor*)
- Best song: "I've Had The Time Of My Life" (Daryl Darvall)
- Best sound: *The Last Emperor*
- Best visual effects: *Overpass*
- Best art direction: Feriando Searfield (*The Last Emperor*)
- Best cinematography: Václav Štráníš (*The Last Emperor*)
- Best costume: James Achson (*The Last Emperor*)
- Irving G. Thalberg Award: Billy Wilder
- Special achievement award: sound effects editing team on *Robocop*
- Gordon E. Sawyer Award: sound specialist Fred Hyman
- Best documentary feature: *The Two-Year Lunch: The Wit And Legend Of The Anonymous Round Table*
- Best documentary short: *Young At Heart*
- Best animated short: *The Man Who Planted Trees*
- Best live action short: *Ray's Male Homosexual Dance Hall*

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Ever wanted to schmooze?
Ever wondered about the best way to
import material? NEILL GLADWIN, who has been
writing scripts Stateside, explores the
language of the all-important deal.

To schmooze and die in L.A.

It often occurred to me, as I sat in Los Angeles looking at the boys of my typewriter, that there was a strange, unknown language among the word and mysterious race that lived in that land called Hollywood.

The form belongs to the world of the executive and the agent in this land of wonder and splendor. Quite often I would find myself having to do a double take at the utterances made by this distant tribe. Perhaps the first word I learned, and it was a good word to know as well, was "schmooze." I remember wrangling an invitation to the opening night party of *Saturday Night Live's* new season. I was told that it would be a good idea if I schmoozed a while as everyone else would be. Not fully understanding this anthropological term, I watched the natives in action.

"Listen, I've got to tell you this new season of your show is going to be the best. I tell you, it will make rounds into the television landscape! What do I do? Well, I've got this project. . . . And thus the schmooze. It seems to be the ability to get out into a crowd, no matter how big, and let every individual present know what it is you're doing for the next two years.

If you have been schmoozing well you may organize a time to either call or in also an appointment. However, it is usually commensurate something like this: . . . Let's do lunch sometime. Yeh, we'll touch base soon. . . . It seems as if no one has lunch — they do lunch. They don't phone somebody; they put a call into so-and-so. And for some reason they want then to touch each other's base. A bit like Australians in Pine Gap I suppose.

After a call has been put into another party, they may discuss how one deal is going to impact another. If the negotiations are getting a little heated, they may refer to each other as double bag. Then again if the deal is going well they may refer to each other as double bag.

Some terms I quite like. Such as "The Abbey Singer." This, so I am told, is the last shot of the day on the set, and is used by some directors to prolong the time until wrap. The word McGuffin was apparently coined by Hitchcock to describe the vehicle for a film. For example the Maltese Falcon is the

McGuffin that propels that film. Some words have a Yiddish background, such as "schlichter" a word for complaining. "Fish out of water" is a term that describes a film that involves a character out of place in a new environment. Crocodile Dundee would be described in this way.

Many words are used that are usually found in other fields. I've always fascinated at the use of words such as "regulate" and "power." Half expecting that they are political and military in feeling, it tends to show the state of the industry in the land across the sea.

Oh to be a fly on the wall in some executive office, somewhere in Los Angeles, to be able to hear those conversations and that wonderful and colorful language that these quaint and all so friendly natives use.

"No, listen, I've got this deal. He could be the next *Bambo* or *Dundee*. It's a great original fish out of water. He's an awesome talent!"

"I've read it — it's a wonder!"

"Trust me. All we need is the script off the pad!"

"Look, would I lie to you? He has the power to create something here. Let's import the material, double bag."

"Don't hesitate. Let's just do lunch."

sometime with Charlie and he'll

"He's a double bag, a schmoozer and you know it!"

"Yeh, OK, he's a real production shot!"

"Anyway, I'm sorry here. Trust me, it'll be great!"

"Yeh, would I lie to you?"

Perhaps if it was translated, it would go something like this:

"Shut up! I'm talking to you. I've just signed a new actor straight out of drama school and he can't act, but he looks great. Actually, he looks nothing like Stallone or Hogan but we can sell him really well to the right market."

"I've read your script, it's a dog (of a movie)!"

"Push you, get me the money!"

"I'm lying through my teeth at you. I got real heavy talking about power like this. Show me the script and I'll turn it like the last one."

"Get off my back. We'll buy Charlie a free lunch, talk him into it."

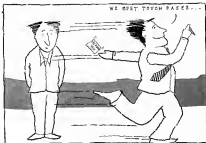
"I like the guy but he schmoozes too much — and so do you."

"Yeh, he's a schmoozer."

"Excuse me, I've got a hotlines appointment now. This will never work. Thank you."

"Yeh, thank you too!"

It's a wrap.





PETER WILLARD SPEAKS

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What's the role of the composer in film, and what should it be? JENNI GYFFYN talked to composers Peter Best, John Clifford-White, Bruce Rowland, Bruce Smeaton and Paul Schutze about the sound (and the budget) of music



Bruce Smeaton



John Clifford-White

THE SOUND

Q: What is your musical background, and why did you decide on composing for film?

—JENNI GYFFYN

ROWLAND: I learned music for a couple of years as a kid and taught myself the rest except for a course I did for a year in conducting. I do all my own conducting, orchestration and arranging. Composing for movies was something I wanted to do. I'd been writing jingles for about 12 years, and before that I used to write music for television. There's much more money in jingle writing than in movies, and much less fatigue and stress — particularly stress! With time I can wait three months and never hear a note until that one fateful day when I put my hands up and conduct the orchestra and it all goes bang! With jingles you get the job the first day, you do the job tomorrow, and then the day after that you send your bill and 120 days later you get a cheque!

I heard they were making *The Man From Snowy River* and Geoff [Burrows] and said I was interested. He said yes — and nine other composers — a song! I wrote a piece for it and was lucky enough to get the job. To get into writing music for films, you've really got to learn all the different facets of music. There's no point in just being a rock and/or pop singer saying "I'll write rock and roll music for film!" In my case, you have to be able to write a believable string quartet or a believable piece for Scottish bagpipes. Chinese music is a lot of African music is a believable symphony, an Elton John look-alike. AC/DC sounding stuff — you've got to be able to do every thing. Otherwise you begin to see pigeon holes and specialized that it's impossible to make a living in this country. The industry is too small.

BEST: I have no musical background! — I didn't even do music at school — but I was always interested in it. I write songs while I was still at school that were really dreadful and were derivatives of all the horses of the day like Quavo Eddy. When I left home and came to Sydney I didn't play music much



Paul Schutze



Bruce Beresford



Peter Dinklage

OF MUSIC



at all, and then I was out drinking with some of my university mates, and something was on the jukebox that I made disparaging remarks about. Somebody said, 'Well, if you're so bloody smart, why don't you do better?' There was a lot of going down town around the table about how the Sun-Maid ad was running a songwriting competition, so I went home and knocked off a few songs — and went I thought, 'Well, it's not that easy, I might as well keep doing it.'

I came out of a background of gigging. Up until a couple of years ago, I guess, I never earned more than \$50 a year. I guess I never loved more than music. Composers are an intellectual exercise and a puzzle to solve. You give them your best shot, but you don't get emotionally involved the way you do with movies. Something like *Blue*, everybody who worked on it felt as though they'd been run over backwards by a steamroller when they came out of it because everyone was so darn critical and interested. It was as haunting emotionally. That doesn't mean you don't make the same kind of effort on a commercial as you do on a movie. It's just that emotional dimension lends to be lacking, or it's less intense.

I'd done a lot of work for Philip Adams and he and Brian Robertson had made a short film called *Jack And Jill* which, for its time, was very interesting. Philip asked me if I'd do some music for that, and I said 'No, there was producing *The Adventures Of Barry McKenzie*' and suggested me to Bruce Beresford and Barry Humphries. I'd been at university with Bruce, but that wasn't regarded by him as any kind of qualification for me to be in a position to write his material. So he said I was me to do it, Barry said I was me to do it, and what happened in the end was that I tried to resign several times. Bruce would have accepted it happily, but Philip wouldn't. In the end I actually wrote a song called *The Adventures Of Barry McKenzie* which I played to Barry Humphries, and he loved it. So that got the pressure off.

Crocodile Dundee was the first film I've ever actually gone after, and I didn't go after it because I knew it was going to be a success or anything like that. They were in Sydney and I was living in Portland. I never



Fraser (front editor) of *Red White*

4. **To Industry Functions** He tried the industry press and I don't know anyone else in the industry music, so I was the last person to find out that they were making a film called *Crossroads* (Sweden). When I did find out it was from somebody who said that dozens of people had been approached and asked to submit songs, so I sent a fairly cheeky letter to Sydney saying: 'Why have you approached every living and dead Australian composer except me?' I got a phone call to say that they still hadn't made a decision about it, and they'd keep me in mind. Three six months later they ring me and said would I come to Sydney and talk to them, which I did. And at the end of that day, without anybody really saying anything, I found myself with the job.

SMEATON: I think people got into music for lots of different reasons. For some it's a totally emotional and instinctive thing. Other people find it's an intellectual thing. They want to play an instrument and they don't actually care about music. With me, I think I was fortunate to grow up in pre-television Melbourne, and that means lots of radio. I found when I went to the United States many years later that I knew more about black jazz and the history of music than almost anyone I'd ever met in the States.

I used to play by ear. It never occurred to me that you would actually train yourself. And then all of a sudden, almost despite myself, I started to wonder how music was put together. That led me into trying to understand how other musicians worked. I started to discover my true nature. I wasn't a player but a writer, which I never knew before. I was a very unapologetic thing because I'm a gregarious person and the idea of sitting in a room alone and writing — I can't tell you how awful that was! But I started writing, and in the process I then gradually also had the knack of being able to hear in my head what I wrote down to a greater or lesser extent.

I was in the RAAF Central Band. I learned to play a lot of instruments and even became interested in instruments. I didn't want to play but wanted to compose for it, and therefore I had to learn their fingering.

I started writing jingles and did more than 2500 of them. There wasn't a lot of money in writing commercials then. Nowadays, some people are making \$5000,000 a year just by writing jingles consistently but when I was there, it was a stepping stone into something else. I had the idea that if I could only use a personal voice with a reliable technique and also have a lot of clever words, I could produce a different sort of

music. I could help people to hear the world in a new way.

Without commercials, I could never have done this.

I met an American at the ABC called Christie Russell, who produced a series called *Seven Little Australians*, instead of a tiny black and white thing, he felt they should consider the whole world, make it as if in colour and as well as they could. Christie had worked with such people as Jerry Delmonico and Bernard Herrmann, and he had made the music for it. I did the music as well as I know how. Christie was very good at briefing — he really knew what he wanted. There was no confusion such as you get with many Australian film makers.

Seven Little Australians worked well. I got an AFI award for the music. I survived by single writing because the budget was so small. *Police at Hugging Rock* was another one — the budget was awful. From there I progressed from one thing to another until finally I could give up the jingles.

CLIFFORD WHITE: I used to do radio productions with a friend at high school who had a tape recorder. I used to choose the music for it, and progressed to making a dramatized movie. My teacher suggested I have a shot at *Seven Little Australians*. Back then they had about 500 applicants and only took 15. They liked the film I did at school and I was accepted.

I was always interested in film editing and music, but I didn't know when I liked better. At first, when the budget was

hands up everyone who wants to be a director. Everybody puts their hands up — everyone's going to be a director. It never gets handed down at the back. Why isn't your hand up, John?

Oh, I want to work in sound.

Of course everyone laughs. What do you want to work in sound for?

Well, if everyone else is going to be a director, there's got to be somebody to put the sound track on.

I started winning short films and did a TV feature called *Red*. I was 19 at the time and

got \$40 for it and got a song into the Australian Song Festival. After *Seven Little Australians* I did music editing for *Cop Shop*, some of *The Sullivan*, *Fraser* and *Clown* and *Law*.

SCHUTZEL: I was a founding member of Laughing Hands, one of the more successful experimental Melbourne bands of the early sixties. We learned, while doing, but mainly around Australia and Europe, that Australia's population is not large enough to support the kind of work which interested us. We were better known in Europe than we were at home. Towards the end of that period we were commissioned to write a score for Roger Schmitz, who was doing post-graduate film at Swinburne. The band admitted general defeat soon after that, though I kept in touch with Roger and worked on his documentaries and shorts. Over the next few years Roger was struggling to get his first feature made (*Judy Ross*, finally took years to realize) and I became convinced that the only way I could work in a mutually where the music would be heard and serve some purpose was film.

Q: How much involvement do you have with the director or producer?

SCHUTZEL: I should point out that my relationship is pretty limited. It started out slowly because I was involved in *Judy Ross* from the beginning. I read the various drafts of the script and talked at length with the director way before pre-production. By the time it was needed, we had a solid base of common ideas with which to talk about music. This was very important because it does not follow that a person who thinks pictures will be able to convey subtleties of his vision to a person who thinks musical notes without some difficulty. I went to the Beatles' library to the reel, watched the editing assisted with the tying up of effects and so on. So I knew fairly well what was required and, more importantly, what wasn't required. There is not a lot of music in that film because it simply isn't appropriate.

SMEATON: It varies depending on the relationship of the film director to the producer. In the case of the *Ministry* production, I was talking about a guy who really does that kind of thing as a collaborator. You know, he will want a lot of music, it varies depending on whether you're being regarded as composer to produce some underlining or as musical director. If you're musical director for the film and you're good enough to be employed for the job, then you're probably good enough to be consulted.

On a recent television series I've done for the ABC called *The Allen Years* (which is based on the boating up of the German immigrants during World War II) all these things have just happened. There is a sequence on board a ship. I went out and researched the proper music for the period and then organized it to be played by a group that could have been typical of that period. The filmmakers didn't want to spend the sort of money they probably should have on an orchestra because it was not just the cost of the musicians but also the cost of a set to house them. It was supposed to be the last class during



The Adventures Of Jerry Williams (Bert)



Coastline Quarters (Harris)

taken at a P & O liner in the 1880s, and because it was cheap labor back then they would have had a large string orchestra and not had to pay anything much at all. However, we had to cut it down.

It's budget priorities. How important is that scene? Once again, if you're talking to a filmmaker who's interested in the film-making process, you'll sit down and talk about these things and sit a little asking, 'Is it too costly? Is a scene may have to be reconstructed?' That's a collaborative filmmaking. Another type of filmmaking is where you get a check-out on Monday afternoon from a pricing services' production assistant telling you that they're shooting a play-back scene the following day, and could they possibly have some music?

I think that if you're going to be employed as musical director, you should be involved in all sorts of aspects of the film. If you're being employed as a composer, you should be interested regardless whether the filmmaker chooses to involve you or not is a completely different matter.

HOWLAND: Very clearly I go on location as often as I can. When I'm writing I like to discuss the scene with the director, and I'll play ideas. The most important thing is to know that you're getting the right feel for the scene. It has to be the right emotional direction.

CLIFFORD-WHITE: Depends on the actual person. Some of them will spend a lot of time with you and say, 'This is what I want, and if you've got a couple of hours can we go through the score here?' And some of them come in and say, 'Well, there's the show! It's not very good but I know you'll like it,' and then walk out! And then you look at it and say, 'No wonder they didn't stay around!'

BISS: Very late. I don't think I've ever had a director or producer that comes along and says, 'I've got a convenience, I'm a director, how often are you really interested?' They'll keep ringing you up with ideas. When you actually read the film, then often they've got fairly strong ideas, but you don't have to take them into account. I've ignored plenty of nice notions I've been given.

Once I've had all the input, everybody can give me. It's actually time for me to put the telephone out of the wall and start work. Then I just have to look at the film, and if a film isn't being loyal to, not the director or the producer. If I feel there's going to be an enormous conflict between what I think the film needs and what the director tells

me to do, then that's something that has to be noted out before I go into the recording studio.

Q: Are you given scripts or rough cuts when you write music for film?

HOWLAND: I'm given a script to start with, and then I'm given the film. Timing is so crucial that you can only write to the finished edited film, and I work my terms totally to what's happening in the film. There have been occasions where I've written a piece of music and the director has asked to do it and to do it, but very rarely.

BISS: Normally I get a script, but usually that's not much good in reading it because once a shoot is over there are more blue pages than any other color! Almost invariably you end up with something that isn't what anybody originally expected. Sometimes it's much better and sometimes it's not. The moment of truth usually comes when you see the first assembly.

With *Coastline Quarters*, I watched that first rough cut that ran about 20 hours and I really enjoyed it. I sort of went in expecting to, but I did. And so I worked on it and saw it more and more times. I got more and more bored with it. I mean John Cornish won't accuse me of delinquency when I say that. There isn't a film around that you can see 500-600 times without getting a bit bored. I had to keep reminding myself just what my first response had been and that's what is valuable. It's that first time you look at it. That's the only time most people are going to see it.

SMELTON: There's a lot of stuff said about this. The film that you're going to base your score on is decided by what they bring back and how they cut it together. If you read a script, that's fine. However, you've got to be very careful how you read it so that you don't become the director by proxy. If you read the script as a writer, and decide as you would say a short story or novel, where you're creative, it's your mood, then it's like a bucket of cold water in the face to see that the actual director has decided to interfere with your vision. You create mental blocks. I think you have to do some pre-thinking. You also have to know what they want from the music. They decide that. I think that music is the servant of the film, but I don't believe it should be the slave.



A Town Like Alice (Smelton)

Q: What about the budget you have to work within?

CLIFFORD-WHITE: It depends on the project. There is a budget and it's worked out, but the accountants usually don't tell you how much it is. They only let you know if you've gone over budget.

Film and television scoring costs of stock music cost about \$40 per 30 seconds, so a sort of stock up. For music editing, I charge by the hour, but for scoring I give them a quote. However, it does depend on the subject matter. I mean if someone wants the London Symphony Orchestra, they're going to have to pay for it. If you quote \$50,000, you've got to share in them that they're not going to get an orchestra for that.

SMELTON: A rule of thumb overseas is that seven per cent of the budget goes to music, unless it's a major-million buck movie. Over here it's usually less than one per cent, which is why it's so timely when they bring in an overseas composer and allocate a generous budget and an overseas type fee.

On *A Town Like Alice*, I was spotted and scored to music like a feature film. In fact I had a better budget in many ways than I have had on some Australian feature films because Harvey Crawford, the producer, actually values the function of music.

There's a very bad habit that's grown up in Australia as a result of angles, and has drifted across to film music. Advertising people will make a huge production out of going off to shoot enough material to make a 30-second commercial. They'll tell you, 'Oh look, we've got \$4,000 for music!'

This can encourage a certain type of composer to pocket the money and do every thing he can on a synthesizer. What perhaps should happen is that the composer works for a fee, which is quite separate from how much money is available to produce the finished track. As we're talking about one brass player or the Berlin Philharmonic? Seventy minutes or 10 minutes of music? Even things like copying charges can vary from almost nothing up to \$12,000.

The minimum fee on a US film is \$2,500,000. You're also paid a separate fee for conducting or orchestrating and for producing the music. You are given a music editor who is responsible for the budgeting, scheduling etc. Out here, unfortunately, it's like we started writing film



The Peters Show Man (East)

• scores for next is asking to help the industry get going and we made a rod for our own backs.

DEIST: They vary. Sometimes they're not bad and sometimes they're very bad! I did *Peters Show Man* 10 years ago and had an all-up budget of \$10,000 including my fee and all costs. On the other hand, I've just done a film called *Custody* for Film Australia (which Ian Munn directed and is a terrific telemovie) and I had a total budget including my fee of \$3000. There are still lots of films being made with small budgets. Sometimes you do them because you really like or respect the people who are making them, or you think it could be something very interesting.

SCHUTZ: It'd be extremely unusual for a composer to get it before pre-production and be consulted as to... This is what we think we want in this film. What is it likely to cost? What normally happens is they say...

This is how much money we have and that's what we want... and if the two things are completely incommensurate you've got to try to figure it out somehow. Unfortunately because music is usually the last thing in the chain of production it suffers badly. Quite often you'll find that the production has chewed into its contingency budget severely and will then start using its music budget as its backup contingency and the music budget starts to disappear.

When you're raising money for a film particularly in Australia, you're basically given a sum of money which is the maximum amount that you can actually raise and you then have to divide it up. So the amount of money allocated for music is not based at all on practical considerations of what is required.

Q: What major disadvantages do you encounter as a film composer?

ROWLAND: I would say the biggest problem is being given very short time in which to produce music. Also the fact that within recording studios for recording orchestras,

are dismissed because there isn't the industry to support it. In Los Angeles, for example, there would be 10 places I could think of that use full-time orchestral recording studios — big 40-foot ceilings, large enough to put 100-piece orchestras into — because traditionally they do lots of that kind of music.

Here, recording studios have to be flexible to the extent that you have a jingle in the morning, that afternoon you'll have a film score, in the evening a rock and roll band on the weekend and the kind to go to is a big orchestral hall like the Robert Blackwood Hall out at Maribah and expect them to get around the problem.

DEIST: The biggest complaint I think all of us have got is insufficient time. The musician is usually the person who's squeezed hardest because he's the last in the queue and he's squeezed for time and budget. I mean, people say to you, 'It is a fairly small budget but we've got a lot of it in our budgeting so, provided we don't have to claim on the insurance and we don't get too many wet weather days, there should be a bit of extra dough and we'll give it your way.' And you know as you gaze at the ceiling while they say these things that by the time you get to raising, there have been wet weather days and there've been problems with cameras, and they've crashed a couple of cars they didn't think they were going to crash, and they've had to employ a dialogue coach whom they had to fly in from Lithuania, and all the budget's gone!

There are occasional exceptions. There are people like Tony Buckley who, after the making of *Bliss* came up to me and said, 'We're really pleased with what you did and we're delighted to save \$5000' (or whatever it was) and we'd like you to have it. That's almost unheard of. Usually you're the last one, so all the last time and last and wasted dough has rebounded cheerfully into it all at once.

Sometimes you'll get an idea as three weeks with a film out and that's really not very long. You'll get a film and there'll be eight months spent in production and two months spent in post-production. And the sound editors are always running late

because the film keeps getting re-cut and they have to keep chopping up all their effects and dialogue tracks. What you'd ideally like to do is give your music to effects tracks so you know what the sound editors are doing and where they've done something adventurous or different. There's a classic case in *Crucible* (Dunder where there's a lampglass shot. Sue goes to sleep in a sleeping bag, and the next thing she's awakened — I think she sits up in terror. I was just using the cutting copy's sound which was a vague mixture of all the effects that were recorded but, and a few that were thrown in to help the idea out. And so I imagined that those guys, who are not to be trusted, away and all bring their 300s. Have questioned her with her hair on and we mixed the music that way and that we got in there and found that the sound editors had been instructed to leave all the noise in the distance. So the music was inappropriate, and we had to do some very early re-mixing and adding to make it work.

But there's never enough time. I'm sure if you talked to anyone — designers, camera operators, scriptwriters, directors, every body — that's what they'd all say. There isn't enough time.

CLIFFORD-WHITE: Oh, yes — money. I was told as a teenager, 'If you want to make money, become a real estate agent.' If you're a John Williams, you're going to make a lot of money and it even took two 30 years to get where he is. He started off doing the theme to *Lost in Space*.

The biggest problem, however, is getting the film into the whole stage and having very little time to do the music.

SCHUTZ: Depending on how you see the role of music in the (and I don't think it is as self-evident or constant) the composer is in that unique position of coming to the film at a point where it has started to sort out a lot of the structure. It's far and away down the chain to have its own logo and title and that might or might not be what was anticipated in pre-production. If you have a genuine interest in film as a medium then you may also have a major problem. A good deal of music written for film in the eighties is undergoing a little bit of a crisis in the last decade because its composers write scores about film music, not scores for or about film itself.

So film changes and develops (however slowly) and the music stays in a sort of loop of dialogue with its own history. You need to know how and why film works.

Most of the time I have worked on have wandered during production into different



The Tin Of Valley Peace (Germany)

arena from those planned. A good director will realize this and brief you accordingly. When your instructions are inappropriate and based on material which didn't make it to the storyboard, you have the problem of writing for what you can see and the audience will see: or writing for what only the director can see. A popular solution is simply to write like Bernard Herrmann and hope no one notices.

EMILTON: I have recorded at Abbey Road, C.T.N. and Olympia in London, Glen Glenn (now Regency Plaza) in L.A., Evergreen and a couple of lesser studios in Los Angeles, and in my experience, one of the biggest problems we've got out here is we do not have any special orchestras recording studios with good room acoustics. There's nowhere in *Asphalte* that you can put in big orchestras and match it up with good equipment and room acoustics.

Another problem is that a lot of Australian directors are incapable of telling you what they want. Meeting a composer is not always part of their craft skills. The composer often has very little control over the musical approach. This is odd, because on the one hand you're told that music is the last great creative input into a movie, and on the other hand you are not often treated as part of the filmmaking process.

Q: What role do you see music playing in the success or failure of a movie, and do you think the composer receives sufficient recognition for his or her contribution?

CLIFFORD-WHITE: The role music plays is huge — absolutely huge. There are some great films that don't need music, such as *Wax*. All where you get the impression there's music but there isn't. Throughout the movie in the background is the sound track of speakers marching around yelling "Hup! Hup!" etc. which is a kind of music.

Another film that hasn't got music but you think it has is *Hiroshima*. It's the Best. Bernard Herrmann takes the credit for that and in a sense there is a score because the soundtrack is electronic, apocalyptic. Herrmann got into something that they had to put it stops to offer it a while because he was experimenting with apocalyptic sub scores. There were some that would make people cry, some that would make people laugh, some that would make people downright suicidal. It was a bit like subliminal advertising, and eventually it was stopped because it was considered too dangerous and unpredictable.

Some people are very ignorant as to what the importance of music to film, but some are brilliant like Stanley Kubrick. He might spend half to five years doing his projects and he spends as much time with the music as he does with the picture.

For years the film score was regarded as the guy who comes to paint the house when it's finished. However, I do believe that scores are getting more recognition now. I was really complimented one day when someone told they didn't hear the music in my show. They said, "Why didn't you put any music on?" and I said, "It's there!" That's the best thing that a scorer can be told. If they notice it and they're supposed to — let the theme — then great. But if they're not, and they say

"Gee, I really liked that music over the tender love scene," then I'd say, "Sorry I've done wrong." It's supposed to be a part of the picture.

Bernard Herrmann was asked what he thought music's role was, and he said, "It should be an invisible thread that comes out of the screen and links the people on the sets to what's on the screen." I think it gets back to getting into the soul of the thing, not just following the action. You put behind the thing what's about and you get into the mood and the atmosphere — the people if you like.

HOWLAND: I think the recognition is growing. The industry has suffered very badly in the past because of television in the days of the *Gunfights* and the *Breakouts*.



Peter Abel Mørup, *Paul* (Director)

there was no such thing as live or spoken music for television and it set a terrible precedent. With shows such as *Honorable Earl Cropper* it's just either straight off a desk and the next week you'd hear the same thing. There were always original effects dropped in — the only thing that was always lacking was music. It put music back on a really long way in the industry but it's now starting to change with the advent of specifically written music for miniseries, documentaries and television shows.

SCHWITZ: I really feel that the role of music in film needs to be reexamined. The division between score, ambient effects and even beds sounds, adding and (pacing or later) become more blurred. As it has in other music, the speed with which this happens will depend on the ability of directors, generally to realize the extraordinary importance of music in film and to become more culturally articulate. Music has changed in important ways in the last five years, particularly in the ways it can be made. Few directors, especially in *Asphalte*, are aware of the possibilities and I think they owe it to their craft to take so much interest in music technology as they do in film stock and camera technology. It's pretty amazing that more real ingenuity and general wit is brought to bear in the average throwaway seven-minute dance single than on most modern feature film scores.

BENT: I think the only reason there's been a bit more attention paid to music in the US over the last few years is because there have been hit scores coming out of films, but I don't think there's recognition of the primary role of a musician in a film. It's not

necessarily something that we have any right to complain about. People are often asked in what they're interested in and no amount of talking by the musical profession is going to make people change that list of priorities where they go to see a movie. They go to see particular actors and the work of particular directors. They can be visually satisfied because that's something they can't experience anywhere else. You sit at the cinema and you look at an enormous screen, so it's natural that you pay a bit more attention to what the cinematographer is doing, doing, for example, than you do to what the musician or the art designer is doing.

It's a source of ironic frustration to me that every single year without fail at the Sydney Morning Herald when they report the AFI awards they list the most amazingly obscure awards but they never list the music awards, and I think it has to be a reflection of how important people think it is. The positive side is that many of the directors are aware of what a difference music can make to their work. In England there's been a bit of a rebirth that has come about as a result of the fact that a number of composers who had reputations as serious musicians have done scores for films. Most of those scores I think were bad because they've been creating music rather than film commentary.

I'm constantly asked by people whether I see the film before I do the music. They say to me, "Oh, so you've seen it then?" as though I might say, "No. I haven't seen it. I've noted the script and then I just did some really nice music and then somebody wheeled it onto the sound track. But that indicates I guess the depth of interest."

I think we in the profession can all expect film reviewers to show a little more interest in the craft and it always disappoints me when I read a film review where all sorts of those craft aspects are not discussed. I'm really interested when I read a film review to know whether the costumes are good and whether it's well designed and whether it's a good music score and a good sound mix. All those things are interesting and are part of it, and I think it's a reviewer's job to talk about them as well. But they do differ naturally and during it as well and I'm certainly doesn't help the rest of the population to develop an appreciation for what we do. Mostly your music's not noticed unless it's noticed.



Ben Bent



CAMERON ALLAN: W

Cameron Allan is an articulate member of what is generally seen as a fairly quiet set: those who compose music for the screen. Since his feature debut at age 19 on Jim Sharman's *Summer Of Secrets*, Allan's career has spanned a wide variety of productions for both commercial TV and the ABC as well as films for cinema release. Most recently he has worked on *The Umbrella Woman*, *Landladies*, the critically acclaimed documentary feature by Susan Lambert and Sarah Gibson, and Hayden Keanan's *Pandemonium*. FELICITY FOX talks to him about his side of the art.

Why do you work in film?

Initially it was because I wanted to be a composer and writing for film seemed like the best way I could develop as a writer. The only real alternative is concert music. I got involved in that when I was still at high school but stopped pursuing it fairly quickly.

Don't you find it frustrating as a film composer, having been a concert writer, that you no longer have an entirely free rein to compose exactly what you like?

You've got much more freedom much more.

But there's a director, there's an image...

Sure. I have to be at the service of a director (it comes debut). But I can write for whatever instruments I want with a commissioned work. I am obliged to stick to the limited concert assemblies that are already set up.

But in many ways a film score is just another sort of commission, isn't it? Length, mood, message, financially, it's defined.

It doesn't really make a difference. There are limitations in every sort of art. The limitations in film scoring I just see as the gradualist side of the score. It's just like writing a poem with a number of constraints. And the big difference in being a composer for film rather than working on a film in any other capacity is that at the end of it all the film score moves independently. And working in film takes me from having to use ensembles. I don't want to use, which means I can do what I'm more interested in — use the studio as a means of creating music instead.

Doesn't believe you've never been frustrated with a score you have to score.

Sure I've been frustrated but generally there are lots you can pull to get there.

But as an artist it must annoy you that it becomes a matter of 'getting there', rather than doing something really fantastic. Was it going to know it was you who made a bad scene work anyway?

Most recent since a bad scene. If you do it for yourself you can be happy. The writer/director comes from seeing a your music the director the film as a whole.

Do film scoring for you was more a

necessitated choice of career than a natural one?

Absolutely. But film is also the only real art form of the century and I had the very instinct too. It's the ideal modern form of expression to involve many many crafts. I can't think of anything quite like it since the enormous European cathedrals they built.

When you decided to move into film, how did it happen for you?

Peter Sculthorpe recommended me for a job he couldn't do. That was a win for the ABC directed by Stafford Carmichael. I've been working with him ever since.

And what do you now see as the composer's role in a film?

To try to make something that adds to the individuality of the film.

To do that, what factors do you have to take into account? You must be analysing more than just visuals.

Oh yes, you're concerned yourself with plot characters every minute.

What were you particularly conscious of when you wrote the score to *The Umbrella Woman*?

Everything I could do that film was taking the main character's state of mind strongly into account. I think that was generally reflected in the darkness of the score. It's a fairly pessimistic film really. That's why it was such a challenge to work on. I got a very good reaction from the score too, it's a purely musical score. We released a 45 minute soundtrack LP with Virgin Records.

Speaking of soundtrack releases, how do you view the hit song in film soundtrack?

I hate it. Can't get me wrong. I really like pop songs. I've spent many years pop doing them. But when you put a pop song with a picture it simplifies everything. You shouldn't need to explain pictures with a song. The lyrics and individuality of the song either has much attention to themselves. The listener should be free to interpret the ending of a film how they like, without a song written all through the end song. Certain lyrics with certain scenes can be very satisfying though.

In there a type of picture you prefer to score?

I don't relate terribly well to domestic type comedies, sitcoms. I actually prefer the art film style.

You've just finished working on

Pandemonium. Tell us about that score.

The score is really only consistent with the film's structure. The music was motivated not by plot so that each feel has its own flavor. The director, Hayden Keanan, was very interested in bringing a mixture of elements into the score and in using a wide variety of musicians. So we had Nathan Wilks, who is a member of the Sydney String Quartet, playing a solo violin on Bach. Then we used the Sydney Youth Choir — 30 voices — because Hayden wanted a choir. That was a completely different sound. Then there was some of the dark baroque solo-style under scoring, we've used voices and sometimes classical guitar more music to accompany scenes with social agents. There's a lovely possible type of sound, it's there.

It sounds rather like a collage with flashes of sound coming from everywhere, putting it along in a really fast pace.

There is that factor to it, yes. We heard everything. We even had one statement of the main theme played on bagpipes. Hayden wanted them and I love their sound. The theme became amazingly simple. They changed it so much.

The Australian film industry has been analysed from all angles. What is it like for a composer working on films in this country?

Well I think for anybody who works on the post-production side of Australian films, low post-production budgets was a big frustration. It means that nobody gets a chance to make a film that is entirely their own and complete. Also there can be a big feeling of warning ahead as some films as they enter mass stage. It can be expected that the reality there is a shock image two years off to a large degree, but film here are telescoped to their detriment. It's post-production it's why which doesn't happen or certain other countries.

When ideally would you work there?

In Europe it's a question of balancing up things and what the country can offer you as far as it work goes. I like places with cultural parties to look at. And in Europe there have a whole history of culture and storytelling behind them that we just don't have here. More than any thing. I think it's important to surround myself with the sort of art I want to be creating. Because I do see myself as an artist.

HAT'S THE SCORE?

IAN BRADLEY DOES

IAN BRADLEY can turn up the profits and minutes of Crawfords with pinpoint ease. Last year he carried out an assessment of the company for Australia Australia Limited. At the time he was with DML, of which Australia had a 16.6 per cent share. When Australia bought Crawfords in October last year, Ian Bradley was made an offer he could not refuse — to carry out the recommendations he had made for the future of the company.

He had been asked by Australia to assess Crawfords' value and suggest "actions to ensure it is as former player".

"I was surprised by what I found," he said. "People had suggested it was moribund, an insignificant force."

On the credit side, he said, he found Crawfords rich in assets and debt-free. *Flying Doctors* had improved enormously since the first series, a momentous pilot with potential was in production, and everyone was very supportive. On the debit side, he said, were under-utilised assets, like the vast building in Box Hill the company owned; a distribution network that sold only final product, with no involvement in premises or co-production; a top-heavy administration with too much collective control; and "a complete lack of inclination to take a risk".

Since his arrival at Crawfords, a sound stage has been rebuilt at the company's Box Hill premises, post production, mixing and colour facilities have been upgraded, and will be available for hire. The production company has been split in two, with one side focusing on local product and the other division concentrating on overseas projects and co-productions, with Crawfords' 3000-hour library as a useful negotiating tool in these deals.

He is reluctant to discuss plans for future productions. The away-fromers from the talent comedy show, *Wags On Q! Work*, are currently developing scripts, part of Bradley's policy to recruit the performers first.

"The Australian scene of business is very good and unrivalled, but by and large, with a couple of notable exceptions, the shows have been let down by the way they are financed and performed," he says. "There seems to be a school of acting that says if you shoot loud enough and make funny faces you have to be funny,

As Melbourne production house Crawfords faces yet another ownership change, PHILIPPA HAWKER hears from chief executive Ian Bradley about the changes he has already put in place.



as opposed to the idea that if you consistently involve your audience they will laugh and maybe cry with you. Therefore it seems to be that if you find people who have the genuine ability to affect an audience in the way we require, upon before you start spending your money, then you have a good chance of succeeding."

Crawfords will not be seeking money for development from funding bodies, he says. "Why tell rival producers what we'll be doing?" He adds: "I think a focus on the mind considerably if you're actually spending your own money."

The most significant changes he points to are: "a reduction of overheads, the decision to make ourselves a much broader-based company, generating income not only from the production of local television, but also from its numerous assets — obviously the key to that is the rebuilding of the studio. The way that that's been done is indicative of what we're going to do. We decided that three weeks after I'd taken over, and within two months we shot the first episode of *The Flying Doctors* there. We're going to be spending about half a million to construct the studio, install lights and all the

other back-up equipment we're putting in."

"The fourth season of *Flying Doctors* which goes in there effectively means that we haven't wasted anything, what we've acquired is an income-generating asset. I know it sounds like being a bookkeeper rather than a television or film producer, but for the first six months or so at least that's mostly what I have to do."

"The priorities for me were to make the assets generate money, to put some long-term development into operation, the third priority will be to look at the overseas distribution network — it has worked very well in some areas, and not very well in others — and to re-organise it to the status of film-making these days. The realism obviously are that MGA is no one to us, so we're interested in possible and co-production partners, rather than MGA agreements where we sell the product after we've made it."

There will be some of that type of risk-taking, he says. "If you're making films, there's an element of risk, and that's another of the thoughts behind getting ourselves in a position where we have an integrated facility, because quite clearly if we make a television that could become a series, we could drive \$200,000 or \$300,000 off the cost of that, because we have all the facilities here."

"The reason that we were able to do it was because we had the backing of a large company like Australia and therefore injecting funds to create income was easy for us, but I think Crawfords had funds to do anything they wanted themselves. But that would have been the thinking behind it, that it's very hard when you're a small independent company to put in that kind of risk investment. We put it in, and obviously it's shown results very quickly."

"There's a clear decision that has to be made as to what sort of business and that's whether you are specifically for the American market or specifically for the UK and European market."

"Given the style of product that Crawfords has made and intends to make, the European market is much more attractive to us. With our reflecting on the past, we will be concentrating most of our effort on the UK and Europe."

He doesn't feel too restricted by the Crawfords image, he says. "If

HIS SUMS

you look at things they have done very well, like *The Saffron and Yellow Dancers*, they have always achieved remarkable production standards at a very low cost, and that domain of product obviously has to stay, but there's a limit to the value of it internationally.

"The area that I think my particular expertise has been in is in filling that gap between film and television. Obviously that's slightly more expensive. If you look at shows like *The Great Australian Robbery* which only cost just over \$500,000 on loan, it's not very hard to see a situation where you can create that standard of production and still obtain sufficient proceeds to make it very viable. You have a longer build-up time and production time, so the two have to live hand in hand.

"Perhaps our minorities and television may have a tougher edge than Crawfords has at the past, and certainly they will be designed specifically with the international market in mind, but that's not to say that we will be throwing our Australian wares, but the ideas have to be able to travel. The tradition will stay, and the future will broaden.

"There are fundamental stories that are relevant to just about every community and those are the stories that obviously travel. Coming from a specific Australian theme and locale is a plus rather than a minus, and that's good for us, because I have those stories that are placed in no country and no circumstances or geographic environment. So it's really a matter of using universal stories.

"A lot of those stories that deal with fundamentals of survival, greed and love will travel. What won't travel are stories that require a really specific knowledge of Australian history, geography and lifestyle. I don't think we're got a shortage of ideas; it is a difference in timing that before you actually start, you say, 'How do I sell this in Germany, or the UK, or the US?' There are the realities those days. It's a shame, but obviously we'd never make *The Diamond*, which I thought was terrific, but it's not the area we're in, we're a commercial production house with large overheads and we need a specific type of product.

"When we're now looking at more than the minorities, because the minorities don't give us enough long-term shelf life — they

play once, and that's it — we're looking more into the television with series potential. That process has only recently started. So far, I've commissioned five scripts on that basis, they're self-contained, but have the potential for a spin-off series. In genre, location and theme, they exploit the advantages of Australia, that are mostly unique, but fit them into a story that overseas audiences will understand.

"Our primary interest is, 'Will this work in Australia?' the second is, 'Will it work overseas?' and if it doesn't, 'Can we do it cheaply enough in Australia?' and, if not, we have a problem.

"Already a lot of the leading writers in Melbourne have approached us, a couple of them with interesting ideas, and some people in the television industry learned their craft at Crawfords, so it's nice to see them coming back and giving us another go.

"Most of the people working on long term projects are on our staff, and most of the people who work on the short term will be based in a freelance capacity, because we don't want to take on as overhead with people when we're not actually making the product.

"Essentially the development process will be done that way. We don't have a head of development apart from myself, we're going out to the community at large to look for our ideas. Right from the start we're after it, so that it isn't traditional Crawfords development, although a lot of the people have worked for Crawfords before.

"You can't rush this, there's no reason to make anything you don't think is worth making, and one of the reasons for constructing the studio and those other income-generating resources is that we're not in a position where we have to make something even if we don't think it's very good. To make those sorts of commitments is a fairly short time is to start with this satisfactory. If I square with PBL, I don't think that we can maintain more than seven or eight projects in any given year, and I always thought we did reasonably well if we managed about that many.

"Or that number, during any time there I think we made 13 or 14, which is a very high rate between development and production, and that's the way I like it to be. I like to do most of the culling before I spend anything."



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MAKING AIRWAVES

The TV networks shake-up

Who owns what in Australian television? LIZ FELL looks at the takeover frenzy that has changed the outlook for broadcasting in Australia

TAKEOVER fever gripped the Australian TV broadcasting industry in 1983. In an atmosphere that resembled an over-heated auction, four bids placed on the top Sydney and Melbourne licences secured to 1400 million and projected earnings reached fantastic multiples. By October, when the share market finally crashed, all but one of the major metropolitan broadcast licences and the majority of regional licences had changed hands at astronomically inflated prices.

The Australian TV industry is now dominated by three new corporate owners who have begun operations opening shopping centre developments, tourism, gold mining, brewing and telecommunications. Each owner has moved swiftly to take advantage of new TV ownership laws and establish US-style networking structures. Manda of Australia's total size is the increasingly global TV market, each has also established links with overseas networks and TV production studios to ensure a plentiful supply of broadcasting product.

The financial scramble to buy up TV licences was triggered by a Federal Labor government policy decision to establish three commercial TV networks across regional Australia. The powerful mainstate licence was granted permission to acquire any number of TV licences up to a ceiling of 68

per cent of the national audience, so long as they concentrated their power in only one mass medium. In the words of Federal Treasurer, Paul Keating, the aim was to create "Frontier of Free, Quality of the Service, and Rights of Radio".

The government's new policy was tailor-made for Rupert Murdoch, whose American citizenship was proving incompatible with Australian law prohibiting foreign control over TV licences. Since there was no equivalent law prohibiting newspaper ownership, Murdoch secured the government's blessing to make a takeover bid for the Australia's largest multi-media group, the Herald and Weekly Times. The takeover turned into an auction which involved almost all of Australia's media houses. Murdoch opened with \$1.85 billion, Holtain & Coeur's Bell Group lifted the stakes to \$2 billion, Murdoch countered with \$2.4 billion, and John Fairfax Ltd made a late run with \$2.4 billion.

Murdoch emerged as the Prince of Australia print media with a national newspaper chain controlling more than 50 per cent of metropolitan daily circulation. As part of the deal, he sold off his commercial TV assets which included two Herald and Weekly Times TV licences and the major share in the two leading Networks Ten licences.

NETWORK NINE — TV and Brewing

In a spectacular move which telegraphically upstaged the Herald and Weekly Times success, Network Nine boss, Kerry Packer, sold off his TV assets for more than \$1 billion at the peak of the market. The purchaser was businessman Alan Bond who is said to have wanted a consolation prize after losing the right to challenge for the Australian Cup. When Bond decided to flow his TV assets several months later, investors judged he had been a little over-generous and underwritten were left to pick up a 37 per cent subscription shortfall. The crash created further problems, and Bond Media stocks are currently trading at a third of their original issue price. This has not stopped Bond from acquiring new TV assets and secured other key properties such as the Chinese telephone company, overseas gold mines and various breweries. Meanwhile, Packer was the recipient of 1750 million in cash, 1500 million Bond Media preference shares — redeemable in 1990 — and a seat on the Bond Media board.

One long-term Bond Corporation strategy is to establish a global communications network. In Europe, it holds the major stake in British Satellite Broadcasting, which is franchised to provide direct broadcast satellite services, and minor shares in TV-AM and World Television News. In the US, it is investigating opportunities to invest in satellite direct broadcast satellite services which could link it with the Network Nine TV facility based in Los Angeles. In the Asia-Pacific region, it has announced plans to buy an interest in TV-1, the consortium awarded the warrant to



establish a third TV service in New Zealand. Bond Media has also acquired a 50 per cent share in Papua New Guinea's RM-TV, and a 25 per cent share in Hong Kong's leading broadcaster, HK-TV. Such share holdings may be reduced when the governments implement foreign ownership restrictions.

In Australia, Bond as well as the way re-dominating both the commercial free-to-air and private pay-TV markets. Bond Media owns the four leading Network Nine TV stations, a 20 per cent share in the Queensland private TV license, and FFL Marikang, Packer's former company which holds rights to broadcast the high rating TV cricket. In the newly established private pay-TV network market, Bond has taken over the interests of Holmes & Coeur and Packer to secure a monopoly over satellite-delivered subscription services.

The Sky Channel satellite-cable sport and plenty of Bond beer commercials to 1400 advertising boards, coach, clubs, betting shops and restaurants in Australia, plus a few hotels in New Zealand. Since there are no regulations specifying ownership or cross-media limits for private pay networks, Bond's only barrier to future expansion is available capacity — and he has plenty of

MAJOR METROPOLITAN TV OWNERSHIP

Market	Commercial Network/Owner	TV Houses
Sydney	Seven (Goswami) Nine (Bond) Ten (Lowe)	1 084 000
Melbourne	Seven (Goswami) Nine (Bond) Ten (Lowe)	1 010 000
Brisbane	Seven (Goswami) Nine (Bond) Ten (Haynes)	487 000
Adelaide	Seven (Goswami) Nine (Lowe) Ten (Lowe)	370 000
Perth	Seven (Goswami) Nine (Bond) Ten (Lowe)	338 000



TV Q&A: How would Network 7 Pay? Dummetry fans at the longest broadcasting strike of the eighties?

tion. He has tied up all the valuable property on Austra, making it virtually impossible for potential competitors such as Hayco and Village Roadshow to gain a foothold in the present market.

When the government lifts the moratorium on providing pay-TV to the public in 1985, Reed will be in a key position. In January, he made a bid for Marvelink Corp, a small company supplying videotape entertainment to hotels and resorts. If this succeeds, Reed Media's Satellite Linear Services subsidiary is expected to deliver a new service direct to subscribers' homes.

NETWORK TEN — TV and Shopping Centres

Murdoch sold his two Network Ten TV stations to the Winfield Capital Corp. (Northern Star group) headed by Frank Lowy, a major developer of regional shopping malls in the US and Australia. In a series of clever manoeuvres, Lowy (who knows as Mr Shopping Centres) has spent nearly \$1 billion establishing a coast-to-coast network which includes ownership of stations at Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra and several plus NSW regional. He financed the deals through equity and some

long-term interest-free debt. Murdoch helped him along by buying a 13 per cent stake — just over the maximum permitted a foreigner under Australian law.

Lowy's attention has been fixed in terms of share price when WOC/Northern Star stock plunged 75 per cent from the 1981 peak after the crash. The Northern Star stations are currently valued about \$300 million below cost, and Lowy has conceded that WOC is in a negative cash flow position. To reverse this flow, he may try to convert Northern Star into a Winfield subsidiary.

Despite these setbacks, Lowy is pushing ahead. Network Ten has five rights of refusal on production from Fox Film, Murdoch's US subsidiary. It also has eight new Australian productions including a comedy, two new current affairs shows featuring some of Australia's top TV newsmen, *Late Night Australia* hosted by Don Lane complete with talk back TV, a soap called *Shrimps* and the Kennedy Miller series *Dynasty*. Some extra rating points may be picked up with the Network Ten office in Brisbane acting as host broadcaster for Expo 88. But more important is the \$10 million Lowy has spent buying the rights to broadcast the high-rating summer Olympic Games.

NETWORK SEVEN — TV and Tourist Resorts

When John Fairfax Ltd finally decided to sell its three Network Seven stations at Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, the market for TV licenses had commenced an slide. The three stations are now controlled by the Queensland-based Quince group, headed by Basilical who led and international tourist resort operator, Chris Skene & Sonner. Fairfax managed to negotiate an excellent deal with his old employer. He paid \$700 million for the three Pacific metropolitan licenses — a price tag critics claimed was too low. In addition, his deal entailed no payment of \$100 million is not due till 1985. Another generous deal with the Bell group as March this year delivered the Perth and Adelaide licenses and pushed Quince above the 60 per cent ownership limit. The government is under pressure to lift this limit to 75 per cent as originally planned. Otherwise, Skene must sell some assets and the most likely purchaser is the small regional TV operator, Ford Ramsay.

Skene has relinquished the network to the Australian Television Network (ATN) with a national audience reach of 90 per cent. In the meantime, Quince owns

stations in Mackay and the Sunshine Coast which will eventually broadcast to the whole of regional Queensland. In the south east, it has signed an affiliate agreement with Paul Ramsay's new Prime network which will broadcast across all of regional NSW and Victoria. Ramsay has recently formed a joint production venture with New York-based D.L. Toffer. Led The new Australian based company, Toffer Ramsay Productions, will team with the Theatre of Comedy's light entertainment divisions in the UK and Fox Prime Comedy in Canada to produce programming for the international market.

Quince Assets Ltd has secured 75 per cent of the Los Angeles-based Hill Road Studios Inc. (HRI) which has a major interest in two independent US TV stations. HRI has recently established a joint production and distribution company with Robert Hales, an independent producer based in New York. It is best known, however, for the controversial colonisation process which it applies to old Mack and where movies and TV series. A deal with MCI Universal gives HRI the rights to colour and distribute some 400 hours of MCI product until the year 2000. This will implement the revenue HRI gains from selling its library of more than 1000 titles.

In the future, Network Seven viewers can expect to watch coloured versions of old US favourites such as *McMack's Nanny*, *Lone Is To Rome*, *The Monkeys*, and *Dances The Women*. Australian productions include the soap, *Home And Away*, and John Farnham 'live in concert'. Don Lane's *Shrimps* Manage *Gold* Cassi coast. He has even promised to deliver 285 hours of Australian content this year in return to the 184 hours required by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal.

The major loser in the Australian TV industry was the highly-guaranteed Bell group led by Robert Holmstrom. Court House missed out on the big TV licence after refusing to pay inflated prices for licences early in the year. Then he got tripped by the new cross-media rules which prohibit ownership of a TV station and newspaper with 50 per cent of its circulation in the same market. After the October crash, he was left trying to sell off \$2 billion worth of assets including the two Network Seven affiliates in Perth and Adelaide. "We found ourselves in the eye of a cyclone," he told shareholders at the annual meeting in December.

MOMMY, WHAT

Sex, death and family movies

Is there a new sexual morality evident in recent American cinema?
SHELLEY KAY checks out what's happening to the family,
coupling and couples on screen.

*"These games must make us really as lonely as thinking about self" —
Mama Grimm isn't the default/denied in terms of formal/interrogative/pen-
etrating structure, they would as high a priority as death, sex, horror,
intimacy, aggression, experience of unshared experience (transcendence)
— Raymond Depue*

I. ON-SCREEN SEX

We are indebted to that harbinger of doom, David Cronenberg, for his characterisation of the disintegration of sexual mores. *Shivers*, *Rabid*, *The Brood*, *Scanners* and, recently, *The Fly*. Sex has become a problem in the space of cinema and, although many significant films do not reflect the hysteria, horror and lunacy of Cronenberg's prodigious works, we get a sense of their insatiability in cinema. (Compare *The Fly* with *Something Wild*: both begin as romantic comedies but a rupture in style gives way to a final climax where the audience feels sympathy for the deceased.)

On-Screen Sex is no longer one big easy; it is undergoing a

process of general deplacemurder. It is a deplacemurder to the point of graphic absurdity, where varying degrees of comedy, tension, death or disenchantment are associated with the sexual act: the hidden secret in *Fatal Attraction*, the ground like *Backlash* in *Love Then Hate*, the erotic counterpoint of *The Fly*, Dennis Hopper's intimate sequence in *Blue Velvet*, sexual union bonding in *Something Wild*, the sleeping bag climax in *River's Edge*, *The Big Boy's* nervous tension against the backdrop, *The Witches Of Blackrock* in 1990. It could be argued that On-Screen Sex is being 'normalised' but maybe it's just being decontextualised in one area in order for it to be reterritorialised in another. For instance, whereas hysterical homosexuality in American film is moving towards some rediscovery of a new and jagged coupling of various characters (*Something Wild*, *Fatal Attraction*), homosexual dialogue films subverting pleasure and enforcing an erotic aesthetic are finding a viable market place (*Love Of Death*, *My Beautiful Laundrette*).

In these incongruous films the re-evaluation of popular

WHAT'S HAPPENING?



opinion concerning sexual activity rests with the American man and woman's ability to decide whether or not to reinvent a functional and pleasurable masculinity which is based on a mutual, sincere/controllable, or to re-establish the suburban American dream (S.A.D.). No matter what the choice, we are assured of a happy ending as long as the couple are united in their quest: the romantic wackiness ending to *Something Wild*, the mutual married blindness of *Fatal Attraction*, the return of the red ruben in *Blue Velvet*, the sexy moral impasse of *Less Than Zero*, and, even within the science fiction of *RoboCop*, there is a hint that the bio-mechanical cop will put a male in the form of a regenerated Nancy Allen.

II. IDENTITY CRISES IN W.A.S.P. TERRITORIES

If the ventral nightmare of the secretaries is characterized by the life-threatening chance of the eighth (I am referring to

AIDS) then we are living in a world stricken by fear. It is this fear that films like *The Fly*, *Less Than Zero*, *Blue Velvet* and *Fatal Attraction* exploit for entertainment value. But one of this fear (a fear of constructing the unknown) causes a crisis of the yuppie-like identity: the generic transformation of Jeff Goldblum into Roundly in the most extreme example of this phenomenon, Charlie Briggs in *Something Wild* discovers he must give up his S.A.D. existence in order to find true happiness with Lohan/Andrey; Blue gives in to Clay's moral coercion in *Less Than Zero*; Jeffrey Beaumont discovers his submerged self in *Blue Velvet*; and, in *Fatal Attraction*, Dan retreats to a suburban haven once the illusion of five sex on the most market looks down — not that Dan's haven is light years away from Gary Oldman's innocent escape in *Mr. Nobody Builds His Dream House*.

a. Masculinity Metamorphosis

Nothing is what it appears to be. Ambivalence. Strangeness. Shifting roles to fit new positions in a changing sexual >



Something Wild (above),
Raising Arizona (right).

the lonelier children of the same period (see *The Elephant Is O.K.*, *Queen I & II*), many nighties' films are obsessed with lovably and/or cornball fathers. *Raising Arizona*, *Kindergarten Cop*, *Mac Graw Don't Exploit*, *Three Men And A Cradle*, *Baby Boom*, and *For Keeps*.

If the technological revolution dictates changing gender-mating identities then it follows that the children themselves in the next few years will be a lot like *Navy* from *Alien*: survival oriented, wildly undisciplined, resistant to adult attempts. In *Real American* Elliot appears more like a boy than a girl as the rebellious part of a soldier for a school play (like a six-year-old *St. Joan*). In the Spanish film, *Love Of Doves*, Ada chooses to revolt against her natural mother and opt for the transsexual Tina whose maternal influence is graciously received. These kids aren't sure; they are kids people sophisticated enough to love. Pee Wee Herman would probably wonder why, for instance, the ABC could conceive of putting his show on it, a late night slot while in America it's programmed as daytime children's TV.

III. A NEW, CLEAR FAMILY OR GENERIC PERMUTATION?

So what does Pee Wee Herman (the Tuckert boy in the world?) have to do with anything? Well folks, American kids are growing up to be American adults — a nightmare for some, a utopian-concrete for others. Glancing around at the mainstream industries I get the feeling we're dealing with a heterogeneous family system — a carnival one at that (Echo a line from *The Last Days Of Great*, it's the bloodsucking Rudy Baruch!).

Genre families have been going crazy trying to pinpoint the new breed generic permutations taking place within American cinema (cf. *Extreme Prejudice*, *Witcher Of Bernbach*, *Real American*). Similarly, American cinema is trying to get a hold on the future of the American family and the results are, if anything, appalling. At a time when one might expect a contraction towards a purely monogamous and nuclear

arrangement is an AIDS-free environment, the mainstream and fringe film industries keep presenting us with competing and viable alternatives: single mother households (*Remains*), *Blind Alley* extended families/communities (*Moonsuck*), *Mixed Blood*, *Suburban*, multiple parent children (*Three Men And A Cradle*), impotent parents (*Power's Edge*, *Over The Edge*), estranged nuclear family (*Light Of Day*), children harbor (*One From The Heart*), baby family (*Reborn*), broken homes (*The Color Purple*, *Empire Of The Sins*), *American*, home for the brave (*Dudes*, *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*, *Beavis Baby*) & regular pot joints of teens with an emphasis on the notion that everything is permitted as long as it provides basic values about caring, comfort, identity (and with that adaptability) as well as love, pride and a passionate life.

However, films like *Real American* would like us to believe that there is no hope for any sort of solution for the monogamous, nuclear family. But let's look at *Real American* way: the rapport set up in this film could mark an end (for now) of the blonde sex goddess Glenn Close in her role as the Other Woman (Alex) is but more parody of a Marilyn Monroe model (the eternal Other, *par excellence*). Glenn Close: charming, seductive, mad-as-hell, Marilyn Monroe-venerable, unorthodox, childlike. (In *The Streets* Your Rob Toss Ewell goes back to his wife, too.) But so what if American cinema chooses to create a mother and then destroy her — who complained when Ripley sent the Mann Almo into orbit? And anyway, doesn't Adrian Lyne's last studied (but somewhat) shot of the family photo leave an ugly taste in your mouth? The suburban American dream? Who can take it seriously? Murdering Alex was a necessary reveal that in the film but mostly the finger always points to Mr and Mrs S.A.B. the Macbeths of the nighties? And finally, isn't the sympathy you feel for Alex not unlike that you have for the violent but charismatic Ray (another bedroom victim) in *Something Wild* or punk-cum-prostitute Julian in *Less Than Zero*? Let's face it, Alex is just another victim (if not cause-effect) in the (heterosexual) race to find a perfect partner. Why all the fuss?

Rikky, Pete

After *Malcolm*, which did for the tram what *The Italian Job* did for the Mini, and had reviewers rummaging through their thesauri in search of synonyms for 'charming' and 'delightful', what have the Nadia Tass-David Parker team been up to? Once more, actor-turned-director

Tass and stills photographer-turned-scriptwriter-and-cinematographer Parker have co-produced a film that features an array of gadgets. PHILIPPA HAWKER finds out from David Parker why it isn't *Malcolm II*.

Australia at CANNES

*Cannes 1988 takes place at a particularly crucial time for the Australian film industry. While the representation is a little smaller than it has been in past years, there is still a varied selection. We talk to Vincent Ward, director and writer of *The Navigator*, an intriguing journey into the present from the past which will be screened in the official competition; David Parker, writer and cinematographer on *Rikky And Pete*, successor to *Malcolm*; Luigi Acquisto, whose short film *Spavantapasseri* has created a lot of interest in his feature debut, *Hungry Heart*; and Maggie Fookes, whose animation *Pleasure Domes* has been selected to take part in the short film competition. We present our guide to the Australian films in the market place, a who's who on the Croisette, a guide to the New Zealand movies on show, and a comprehensive guide to the film, telefeature and miniseries activity of the past year.*

I'm pretty sure there are a lot of people out there going 'Let's see if they can do it again — and I hope they can't.' I know from looking around on film crews that people are like that," says David Parker, reflecting on the problems of a successful debut film. "Some segments of the industry would like the film not to be the success that *Malcolm* was. They feel, 'How come someone can suddenly write a script, and live with it and they make a film that's successful when we've been plugging away for 15 years?'"

So, after *Malcolm*, what? It could easily have been *Malcolm II*. "We certainly had many offers to remake it in the American way, but we were quite attracted by it all. The film is quite dear to our hearts, and an influx of money isn't necessarily going to improve it."

The next Parker-Tass film, *Rikky And Pete*, moves from suburban Melbourne to an outback mining town. Instead of focusing on those people sharing a house, it has a cast of 54 speaking parts. What it most obviously has in common with *Malcolm* is gaudiness. "Where the first film had newspaper builders that held up books and giveaway cars that split in two, this one features a contraption that delivers newspapers as if they were paper planes and a muzzing device that is a cross between a mechanical Highland piper and a truck horn."

Parker admits that they had some overreactions about using contraptions again. "I don't want us to be pigeonholed — all they can do is make films about gaudiness. In fact for Nadia, nothing could be further from the truth. She'd much rather deal with actors. They tend to be much less temperamental than the mechanical elements of the film."

Rikky and *Pete* are brother and sister in their late twenties. Parker was particularly keen to explore the sibling relationship, saying, "I'm interested in the family. I think it's something my generation moved away from in the Anglo-Saxon world, and I don't think we ever came up with any replacement for it. Brother and sister is a real relationship, it is not used very much, particularly in the commercial cinema."

When Parker and Tass were looking for finance, they found out why. In a lot of cases, they were told that the pair should be lovers or, failing that, one of them should be an American. The obvious problem — an American states, an Australian

and mine over matter



NPKY AND PNTB: Stephen Rea and Neil Patrick Harris



DIGGERS Steve Linn, Bruce Spence and Bruce Lawrence

a brother — could be solved by the girl having been a university student in New York for a couple of years.

They mark out the siblings, and an all-Australian cast, but they took a long time to cast the leads. The delay caused them some serious anxieties. "We had the premise and we had to go out on a limb with United Artists to convince them not to have any Americans in the picture. We felt, and we still feel, that a hybrid film doesn't have the same chance of success as one that is pure. And to give them their due, they did have faith in us."

The casting problems, Parker says, were twofold. "I think there's any number of people who can play lovers or potential lovers, but to grasp the brother-sister relationship isn't as straightforward. And I don't think there's a massive chance anywhere for leading men and women in that age-group."

"We looked at a lot of the more experienced people and felt that none of them was right for the part. And there weren't a lot to choose from. Then Nadia started to look at the people she thought had the qualities without the experience."

As *Rikky*, geologist, folk singer and the more practical of the two, they cast Nina Lunnell, an actress with some television experience. As the withdrawn Peter, at odds with his father and the law, they decided on Stephen Kearney, half of the comedy duo *Los Three Rhapsodists*.

Having cast relatively inexperienced actors, they aimed for a long rehearsal period. "Nadia struggled for an American drama teacher, Carol Fowkes-Pennant, to spend a week with the leads, but also with any of the other support cast who wanted to be involved, working through their characters and the acting process in general, and I think that helped a lot. She spent five weeks rehearsing with Steve, and three with Nina, before we started shooting. We had an amazingly strong support cast — Bill Hunter, Bruce Lawrence, Bruce Spence, Rod Whittaker, Ralph Cottrill — and we had to be really careful that these parts didn't swamp the leads."

Parker believes that the lack of a screen writer tradition is a problem for Australian cinema. "That's the area that needs

more developing, apart from that old cry of, 'The scripts, the scripts,' of course," he says. For him, it's not so much the scripts: Australia lacks producers with the experience to guide a script through all its stages, and match the personnel to it.

He and Nicola Tass have chosen to take on that role themselves. "The hardheaded businessman aspect is not as keeping with the creative process — there's a reason why there are different people doing those jobs. You've got to be unflinched by the knockback in the morning if you're writing in the afternoon. It's wearing, but with it comes peace of mind. You know what the deal is."

The script for *Rikky And Pete* was not written directly after *Melrose*. There was another one in between, which David Parker brought to revised first draft stage before he shelved it. "It was about a film crew, and I started seeing so many films that were about the industry about actors or writers, that I started to think it was a pretty strange direction to take — reflecting our industry rather than society at large. I took some of the characters and some of the film-within-a-film elements and put them into *Rikky And Pete*, so if I were to persevere with that one I'd have to change it a lot."

Parker and Tass went together on 'the flow of the film, what the psychological issue should be, and then wrote a story around it." For *Rikky And Pete*, they decided that the brother and sister should come from an upper middle class family, not from the working class like *Melrose*. "With them, we wanted to examine the idea that everything is clinical. Just because they're well off, that doesn't mean they're going to have an easy life. We wanted to examine the struggles that these people have, the questioning of the values of that whole class, but at all times to place that as a base for comedy. If you give it a base that has integrity and truth about it, and build the comedy on that, it gives the audience much more than they expect."

The outbreak setting gave the film a rich variety of characters, he feels. "It's crazy that so many films made in this country ignore the weird and wonderful variety of people here, especially in the outback. As we do in this film, you start to question normality, and you certainly start to question what you're up to yourself, which is what *Rikky* and *Pete* go through."

Rikky and *Pete* leave Melbourne for a mining town and, briefly, *Pete* gets a job down a mine. Parker himself spent a year in Mt Isa after he had dropped out of an engineering course in Queensland, and before he started a photography course. "I was just an oddo of it," he says of the job. "I'd been to a private school, university, I'd had excellent jobs at Myers — I'd certainly never been a laborer."

They filmed a mine down a mine, 3200 feet under. "It went amazingly smoothly considering the difficulties that were involved. It's only a small segment of the film, but I think it's important to show it. What comes out of it is on the film is that *Pete* decides that there's got to be a better way, and he and his sister end up starting their own mine. She is a geologist, and finds a place where there is ore that is easier to get at. He devises a machine that, as they say in the film, does the work of three.

"It's an odd-looking machine, and I suppose that is a practical sort of pretty questionable. It was extremely difficult to make, and I actually figured that no one else has done it before. They used walking things in *Star Wars*, but they were made: the stones are quite horrific when you try to make something that will carry a person and walk. You don't realize how well-designed your legs are." A lengthy testing program was carried out up and down the mine where their production office is situated.

The next Parker-Tass project is not yet decided. At the moment, Parker is looking at a script based in Beverly Hills, that he says is "really appealing." And the experience of *Rikky And Pete*, with hardly a day in the same location, has had some effect on his current script. "What I'm writing now tends to be interior, more suburban," he says carefully.

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Vincent Ward's *The Navigator* — A Medieval Odyssey travels between past and present, colour and black-and-white, dream and reality. MICHELE NAYMAN talks to director Vincent Ward about the film, a Cannes competitor



THE NAVIGATOR

Vincent Ward's past dreams of the future

THE NAVIGATOR: Hannah McFarlane and (inset) scenes from the film

It was 4 am in Auckland and the houses were empty. There was still half a mile of road that had to be watered down if the street was going to be continuous. Vincent Ward, writer-director of *The Navigator*, found some backstreets. The rest of the street was watered by hand.

"One of the elements of the film I was trying to achieve," he explains, "was a look of offensive surfaces in the 20th century, so that things would have a transience, an inconstancy, a phosphorescence. I know I pay a lot of attention to detail. It drives everybody mad."

"There are scenes," says Geoffrey Simpson, director of photography, "when you want to write his code. But then you see the results, and the results are very distinctive."

The Navigator is set in a Cornish village in the north of England in 1348, at the time of the plague. Conner, a village leader, returns from a journey outside the village with tales of mass death. There is talk of the need for a pilgrimage to raise a cross on the greatest cathedral in the world before sunrise if

the village is to be protected.

Conner and four other men set out on this pilgrimage, guided by the dream of a boy. Griffin, the child, tells his vision of a tunnel to the other side of the earth and a cathedral there.

The men tunnel through the earth until they find the sewers of a great city, from which they emerge into the antipodan city of Auckland in the late 20th century. Until this point, the film is in high contrast black-and-white — "to provide an almost documentary-like feel of what must have been a harsh and colourless existence," Ward explains.

In 30th century Auckland, the film explodes into colour. The differentiation of place works well. What works less well, perhaps, is the differentiation of time. The narrative structure prepares us for the arrival in the city on the other side of the world but there are no narrative clues as to why the travellers should have jumped 650 years in time. At the end of the film we find that the journey had been entirely Griffin's dream (in



other words, he had a dream about following a dream, but it isn't explained that the dream was about the future. The audience has to take it on trust.

When asked about this, Ward tells a story he heard during travels in Ecuador four years ago. "A man dreamed of a city that glimmered and reflected," he says. "In that place now, there is a small city of corrugated steel and glass. The thing that struck me was that it would be possible for someone who came from an impoverished background — unlike the wealthy and influential Nohemianus — to have something to contribute in terms of perception that could be easily more accurate. Much of what is learned is forgotten. One assumes that one is more superior than someone 600 years ago, but in many areas we know less."

Ward says he has tried to make this point in the film by portraying the 13th century city "as seen through medieval eyes in terms of music and palette."

"The colours are medieval — the deep blues of the metal-

way and telephone lights, police car lights and the blues of the submarines. The music — an original score by David Tubbs — has medieval tones, rhythm and range.

"The film is a medieval odyssey. It's the story of people meeting their ancestors, of people meeting their descendants. It's more, involves a suspension of disbelief, is very childlike. I wanted a sense of wonder."

The most striking thing about the film is its visual richness, its painterly feel, and as it comes as no surprise to find that Ward originally trained as a painter. "I became a filmmaker by mistake," he says.

For each film — he's made three so far — he does a painting and works with storyboard artists. For *The Navigator*, he did extensive visual research into how medieval Celtic monks lived. At one time during the four years he worked on the film, he employed a full-time researcher in England.

The research didn't stop at the visual. Three actors together worked with the actors to produce the pronunciation and intonation of Celtic medieval English ("day" for "the", for example, or the long vowel in "look"). The results are impressive.

Also impressive are the locations and the special effects. The film was shot over 10 weeks, between July and September 1987. Eight of those weeks were night shoots.

Locations included the top of the New Zealand Southern Alps, where scenes were by helicopter, and at the top of Mount Ruapehu. The tunnel scenes were filmed 100 metres underground at Wharema, in the centre of the north island, where scenes were by rope.

Ward declines to talk about budget other than to say that *The Navigator* had "probably the highest budget of a New Zealand film to date". The budget has been estimated at \$44,800,000 (see *Cinema Papers* 68, November 1987). Produced by Armin Pösch, with the Film Investment Corporation of New Zealand, the feature is an Australian and New Zealand co-production, with the assistance of the Australian and New Zealand Film Commissioners.

The Navigator became a co-production in 1986 when John Maynard, the producer, was unable to raise the necessary underwriting in New Zealand.

"This was despite pre-sales in the UK, USA and Australia which were a record for a New Zealand film," Ward says. "We approached more than 120 companies. At that time, New Zealand financiers were financing around \$4250 million worth of American and English stage productions. In the same week that our film fell over, the main financiers we were dealing with financed \$4210 million worth of New York productions through tax breaks."

Ward, who is 33, made his film debut in 1978 with a 35-minute feature called *A State Of Siege*, adapted from a book by New Zealand novelist Janet Frame. His next project was a 45-minute documentary called *In Spring One Place Alone*, which appeared in 1981 and which, with *A State Of Siege*, was shown in six US cities as well as in New Zealand.

Both films won several prizes. *A State Of Siege* won a gold medal, special jury prize, at the Moscow Film Festival and a golden Hugo at the Chicago Film Festival. *In Spring One Place Alone* was co-winner of the Grand Prix at the Cannes du Rial in Paris, and a silver Hugo winner at the Chicago Film Festival.

The film Ward is best known for, however, is *Flight* which, in 1984, became the first film from New Zealand to be accepted for competition at Cannes. It is still the only New Zealand film ever to have had that honour. This film also won several awards and is expected eventually to make a profit.

Ward has written (or co-written) and directed all of his films but chooses the word screen because it's French. He's happier seeing himself as a New Zealand composer.

"It's only in the last 10 years that there has been a concerted look at ourselves in New Zealand through film," he says.



After his acclaimed short, *Spaventapassori*, Luigi Acquisto makes his feature debut with *Hungry Heart*. KATHY BAIL talks to him about his exploration of the damage that love can inflict.

The darker side

If Luigi Acquisto had the choice, his first feature film wouldn't have been about love. Perhaps a thriller, shot in black and white, exploring the darker side of a city that a young director-for-hire cannot be too choosy, and in any case, you can explore a love story in any genre.

So when producers Ross Colosimo and Ray McLennan approached Acquisto with the script of *Hungry Heart*, the challenge was to set down his ideas, but within certain parameters. He saw an opportunity to make a film about the darker side of love, the tendency of relationships to reach an impasse. The bleak and rootless relationship between Kai (Nick Carraway), a doctor returning to his mother's home after completing his internship in the country, and Rose (Kemberley Development), a country girl innocently adult in the city, became the focus of the film.

Unlike Acquisto's celebrated short film, *Spaventapassori*, the main strand of the narrative is about sexual conflict, although questions of cultural difference inevitably surface in various episodes. Cultural dislocation was at the heart of the earlier film. Subjective and more personal in tone, it shows a child's view of a new country and explores the tensions in a household shared by the child's parents and another Italian family well settled in Australia. Acquisto wrote, directed and edited *Spaventapassori* in 1988 as part of the post graduate course in film at Senebierre.

For Acquisto, scripting and directing go hand-in-hand and he welcomed the chance to develop further the script of *Hungry Heart*. "There were a lot of things about the first drafts (written by Colosimo, Angela Salvaneschi and Joux Arnould) that I didn't find comfortable with so they gave me the go-ahead to rewrite. It's been rewritten quite substantially. The framework was kept so faithfully, but the action, dialogue, subtextures and nuances, even characterisation, tended to change. The process of doing that was good, Ross was very flexible and supportive. The reaction was really nice. The first draft was rewritten in a couple of weeks and the second over a period of five weeks though a lot of that was during pre-production."

He wanted to start production with a tight script. The dialogue, particularly between the two main characters, is restrained, with a tendency to use visual images or sound to convey emotion. It is, Acquisto says, a deliberate strategy: "Dialogue is another element along with visuals and sound and, if anything, should work as a counterpoint rather than reinforcing or doubling up on what we're seeing. So if you have a scene that appears to be quite casual in terms of what the characters are doing, you can have tension established through what they are saying. It's probably more powerful if it happens the other way round; if you see a tension between

the characters and yet there is a trivial or harmless conversation happening between them. There is a dialogue established between what you're hearing and what you're seeing and that can be furthered through the sound structure.

"There was a description that Seneb used to describe Carraway's work — and I'm not creating parallel at all between *Hungry Heart* and *Carnegie* — when you read *The Graduate* it's as if there is a glass pane between you and the action. So that as a viewer the action itself is quite clear but the significance of it is opaque. That's true of *Hungry Heart* to an extent; the action and the visuals are quite strong in telling the story but the characters' motives aren't always revealed through the dialogue."

Joux Arnould's cinematography (one of the delights of *Spaventapassori*) gives *Hungry Heart* the polish and visual sophistication that is the basis of Acquisto's approach. Not that it always succeeds, the optimism or misanthropy of the design allows little room for error in the performers, but it is a risk Acquisto is prepared to take. "One of the problems I saw shooting on Mann was a tendency for the film to become claustrophobic in the way that it was framed," he explains. "In one scene we removed the actors because they just seemed to be intrusive. Also, in this film I wanted to focus on the characters more than I did in *Spaventapassori* where there is a greater tendency to locate the characters within a landscape, or a social and historical context. There are still elements of that style in *Hungry Heart* (in the latter part a scene to open out) but the tendency was to focus on the characters more directly."

"Even though visually the characters are often the focus of what is going on, there's still a distance there. It's as if there's a closeness to the characters but not an intimacy which perhaps some people find uncomfortable or unsettling. Part of that is that the characters won't always confess what they are feeling, a lot of it tends to work in fairly subtle ways, through metaphor, recurring motifs, and nuances. I think there is a certain reserve in the film."

Indeed, it is the moments when the characters begin to share stories of the past, of childhood, that the dialogue becomes denser, conversations are allowed to meander. It has been noted that in the novels of Marceline Desmaisons the first point of contact the lovers is in recounting their childhood. "If it's significant perhaps it is because of that," says Acquisto. "Obviously it was also to give some sense of history to the characters."

Hungry Heart seductively attempts to tell a number of stories. Through its episodic structure, we are introduced to a gallery of characters who account for the coming, gone ahead aspects of the narrative. Vero (Dionello Malone), the eccentric grandfather who, with eyes that light, regularly prepares for

of love

death in the middle of the road outside the cemetery, Charlie (Mark Ruffalo), a petty crim intent on signing up Sal, and Mr O'Ryan (Norissa Kapt) who attempts to charm Sal's mother, Mrs Bono (Diana Richens) with black flowers and purple prose.

Aquino feels the humour, generally offered by the peripheral characters, balances the oppressiveness of the Kato/Sal relationship: "The original script had all these different characters, maybe not in the same form or doing the same things as they are doing now, and I needed to give them a certain weight and time within the film and humour was one way of doing that."

"The other relationships give resonance to the central theme of the film which is the tendency of relationships to reach an impasse, a point where they don't progress any further. This seems to be the case with the Mr O'Ryan and Mrs Bono characters and although there is no suggestion that anything is going to eventuate, it is in a qualitatively different way. Kate and Sal's relationship is not reflective at all of the damage it is doing to the two people involved, whereas there is a certain continuity with Mr O'Ryan and Mrs Bono, a suggestion of some sort of game-playing."

While the publicity for *Hungry Heart* insists that it is not a "flag-waving" film, the film is nevertheless intent on working against stereotypes that exist in characterisations of migrant families. "One of the things was to suggest that the family had done very well for itself in business which is often the case with contemporary migrant families who have been here 20 or 30 years," Aquino explains. "With the mother and son, I not only wanted to show conflict but some intimacy between the two of them. Also, having the family speak in English was an interesting choice, one that I wasn't initially comfortable with, but I think it works because it is a contemporary film: the grandfather's been here for 20 years, the kids have grown up... so it's quite probable they would speak English at home. But as a film like *Spencer's Square*, to have the characters speak English in a stifled setting of newly-arrived migrants would've reinforced those stereotypical images of migrants speaking in broken English in a very clumsy way."

Aquino is working on a short documentary for an SBS series produced in conjunction with the Australia Council and has written a script for a feature film titled *They Deserve Their Name*, however, he would like to move up a gear and shoot in 35mm or even Super 35mm. And if he was to do another low budget, he's sure it would be different. "I'd start with a situation that is perhaps blank to begin with and move towards something that is more optimistic. I'd probably deal with older characters. Those characters are somewhere between adolescence and adulthood. So when you start with that, there's only one way to go..."

HUNGRY HEART: Kimberley Drysdale, Nick Garrett, Oswald Malone (prev)



A dome of one's own



PLEASURE DOMES: St Kilda baths

Maggie Fookes's animation, *Pleasure Domes*, has been selected to take part in the Cannes short film competition. KATHY BAIL talks to her about landscape, animation, imagination and the view from her room.

Maggie Fookes's short animation, *Pleasure Domes*, for every one of its eight minutes, reverberates on many levels: it is a portrait of a crumbling seaside suburb being overtaken by business, a wry reference to Hollywood's fantasy image of the Riviera, a protest toward the Impressionist painters and their obsessive concern with light and colour, a reminder of the dome that Coleridge dreamed, a discourse on Australia's relationship to Europe, and to the Aborigines, and, ultimately, a story whose beginning might be, "one day as I was sitting on my balcony..."

The view from Fookes's thirteenth-century apartment on the St Kilda headlands inspired her to do the series of watercolour drawings that make up the film. It also led her to seek out old photographs of the piers, the promenade and the buildings (theatre, sea baths, fun fairs) that had once stood proudly in front of her window. She photographed and hand-coloured the photographs and added them to the screen.

She says *Pleasure Domes* is a personal, retrospective film on, not simply her response to one view, but the nature of landscape. "It hints that our perception of landscape is never done but always filtered through a set of constructs, either physical or psychological."

In the eloquent voiceover used in the film, we are told that although this is St Kilda, we could be anywhere, the view is familiar because we know it from a number of real and imagined places. "I often sit here looking out the window and some nights I feel like I could be anywhere in the world," says Fookes. "But I don't actually mean anywhere, any city. It's this image, the Riviera, Hollywood, Californian beaches. So Kate Hawcombe (the writer) literally used those words in the soundtrack; you don't mean anywhere, you mean Nice, Cannes..."

That idea is the trigger. The film constantly opens out, cutting from images of cancer cells and sinister dance bands to a seaside panorama of houses with colour, from a meditation on how the Kooris shaped the land with spiritual rather than material emphasis to a sequence on glamour as "divine magic." Seemingly infinite, there is a sense of play, and a suggestion that the "I" of the narrative voice is always shifting.

Fookes completed *Pleasure Domes* last year as part of the animation course at Swinburne, a course which gave her "time, access to equipment and someone to answer questions." She also made *Dreams*, a film for which she had received funding but had technical difficulty producing. An earlier experimental film made with Chris Knowles (who arranged the soundtrack of *Pleasure Domes*) and various slide animators were the basis for this work.

Partly because of her architectural background, Fookes has an adventurous approach to animation technique. "I don't think the possibilities of animation have been reached. I think

we've taken traditional styles of animation, and figures and characters, and stopped there. I hope we can start using drawn images — and that's after all, all it is — as we've become used to seeing them in graphics or painting. I have done a lot of landscape architectural drawing and rendering and I think these past moments have come through in *Pleasure Domes*. It also gave me a chance to see my own work in some contained form, I haven't seen that before."

Fookes used hundreds of drawings for the film, fewer, however, than traditional animation because she used "still" images. "The slow method," she explains, "no computer control! The movement is basically done by dissolving each image into itself, or onto the next one. It's all done by hand. Each time, I dissolved out over 20 frames and dissolved back in again, so I put the image under the camera, searched for the part of the image that I wanted to film, then filmed 20 frames, dissolving out on each frame. The movement comes from re-framing the drawing or re-animating the camera."

A lot of the detail in the film, taken from the coloured photographs, is down to what's called 2 field or 2 inches which is very small. Most of it's shot on 7 field. I think the biggest field size I used was 10. Most animation is shot on 12.

"What fascinated me was the texture that comes from the photographs and the watercolours, the detailed line, and you can only get that when you look at a drawing on a microscopical way."

While filmmakers generally seek high definition and realism in an image, Fookes has a passion for "making things into texture", combining and abstracting images until they are far removed from the original. Most of the original artwork was done on paper. However, the opening sequence which involved painting onto coll, used live-action film. Each image was shot twice, giving it a halftone effect.

Like the image sequences, the soundtrack was layered, establishing, says Fookes, further associations. "Chris Knowles cut the sound to the image. He reversed the sound for the dance sequence, he recorded excerpts of tharanga music, looped different poems and put it through the synthesizer and manipulated it. All of the sound is taken from sound recordings and ambient sound effects records then looped, so it's perfect for the images. The film has a 'breathing' that comes with the repetition and also that 16-frame dissolve which is pretty constant — it's almost got a 1 second breath. The sound picks that up beautifully. But nothing was 'composed'; it wasn't played and recorded."

It was, like the view from the balcony, invented.

Pleasure Domes Animation: Maggie Fookes. Producer: John Bird. Screenplay: Sarah Chris. Screenplay: Kate Hawcombe. Images: Maggie Fookes. Music: Jonathan. English and French. John Porphy. French production: Anne Pigeat. English production: Kate Hawcombe. Screenplay: Sarah Chris. Screenplay: Sarah Chris. Screenplay: Sarah Chris.

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Fever

FEVER

Bill Hunter plays Jack, a country cop who survives a shootout to find himself in possession of the proceeds of a huge drug deal. He decides to keep it so that he and his young wife can start a new life

together, but he returns to surprise her with a young lover. In the ensuing struggle, the lovers believe they have killed Jack, so they dump his body, take the money and run. He is still alive, however, and he and the drug

syndicate are hot on the fugitives' trail. Director Craig Lukoff has also directed the thriller *Coda*.

• **Director:** Craig Lukoff. **Producers:** Terry Jennings, Bradshaw Productions. **Cast:** Sandra, Douglass, Montgomery. **Craig Lukoff:** John Henry. **Director of photography:** David Korman. **Editor:** Denise Hensley. **Art director:** Gerald Maly. **Cost:** \$1.1 million. **Release:** Miramax. **Story:** David Jett Holt.

Running time: 92 minutes

JILTED

Winer and director Bill Bennett shot *Jilted* on Fraser Island, the tropical resort where his five main characters undergo changes that will affect their lives forever. Jennifer Cluff plays Henry, the woman who is the catalyst for change. Richard More, Tim Burall, Steve Jacobs and Helen Marston are the staff on the resort with whom she comes into contact. *Jilted* is even more of an action film than Bennett's second employment feature, *Backlash*, although this time he is working closely on the script.

• **Created and written by:** Bill Bennett. **Producers:** Bill Bennett, James Dev. **Director of photography:** Geoff Benjamin. **Editor:** Denise Hensley. **Music:** Michael Jackson. **Cost:** \$1.1 million. **Release:** Miramax. **Story:** David Jett Holt.

Running time: 92 minutes

SEBASTIAN AND THE SPARROW

Sebastian And The Sparrow is the story of a friendship between two teenagers from opposite sides of the tracks. Sparrow is the son of a soldier who returned from national service with a Vietnamese wife, but he has been separated from his parents for a long time. Sebastian is the child of wealthy parents, but he is cut off from them and bored with his parents' idle existence. The two boys become friends over the video game they both love to play, and embark on a search for Sparrow's mother which takes them to far afield as the Malaysian Plan and the conflict of the Great Australian Bight.

• **Created, written and produced by:** Scott Moss. **Executive producer:** David Winer. **Director of photography:** David Freeman. **Editor:** P.J. Korman. **Production designer:** Ann Downing. **Cost:** \$1.1 million. **Release:** Miramax. **Story:** David Jett Holt. **Director of photography:** David Freeman. **Editor:** P.J. Korman. **Production designer:** Ann Downing. **Cost:** \$1.1 million. **Release:** Miramax. **Story:** David Jett Holt.

Sales contact: J.C. Williamson Film Distribution Pty Ltd, 44 Berry Street, North Sydney, NSW. **Ph:** (02) 955 1555

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RICKY AND PETE

Hubbard-and-white comic David Parker and Madea Tim follow their friends about Malibu with the tale of a brother and sister who learn that comfortable Malibu can have a dark side when they return to an old beach house town (see entry p26)

• **Director:** Mike Todd. **Producers:** Mike Todd, David Parker. **Executive producer:** Timothy White. **Executive producer:** Wayne Harrison. **Director of photography:** David Parker. **Screenplay:** David Parker. **Music:** Ron Soble. **Production designer:** Josephine Ford. **Cost:** Stephen Rogers. **Release:** Lantana. **Release:** Academy. **Cost:** \$1.1 million. **Release:** Miramax. **Story:** David Parker. **Director of photography:** David Parker.

Running time: 95 minutes

Sales contact: Cineplex Films (Australia) Pty Ltd, 24 Living Street, South Yarra, Victoria, Ph: (03) 955 1557

BREAKING LOOSE

Producer: Phillip Jordan's 1973 film *Summer City* was made for the debut of Mel Gibson. *Breaking Loose* is a follow-up, telling the story of a young and rebellious student who tries to come to terms with himself by visiting his mother's home town. His quest is filled with very real danger, and the film climaxes with a confrontation with the mafia of the town, where his girlfriend is taken hostage.

• **Created and written by:** Ron Hay. **Producers:** Philip Jordan. **Executive producer:** Tim Jett. **Director of photography:** Bernard Morris. **Editor:** Ted Ott. **Music:** John Pomeroy. **Cost:** \$1.1 million. **Release:** Miramax. **Story:** David Jett Holt. **Director of photography:** Bernard Morris. **Editor:** Ted Ott. **Music:** John Pomeroy. **Cost:** \$1.1 million. **Release:** Miramax. **Story:** David Jett Holt.

Running time: 95 minutes

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**Write for further information and
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Number 1 (January 1974)

David Williamson, Ray Harryhausen, Peter Weir, Anthony Geffen, Gahan Ahlstrom, Ken S. Hill, *The Cars That Ate Paris*.

Number 2 (April 1974)

Conrad, Frank Marshall, Nicolas Riso, Sandy Harbutt, film under license, *Between The Wars*, *Also People*.

Number 3 (July 1974) Richard Brannan, John Pagodopolos, Willie O'Brien, William Friedkin, *The True Story Of Robin Hood*.

Number 10 (September-October 1976) Nagisa Oshima, Philippe Mora, Krzysztof Zanussi, Mirco Ferreri, Marco Bellocchio, gay cinema.

Number 11 (January 1977)

Ennio de Antonio, Jill Rollo, Samuel Z. Arkoff, Roman Polanski, Saul Zaentz, *The Picture Show Man*.

Number 12 (April 1977) Ken Loach, Tom Hayden, Donald Sutherland, Bill DeLong, Peter Tost, John Gaskin, John Scott, *Days Of Hope, The Getting Of Wisdom*.

Number 13 (July 1977) Louis Malle, Paul Cox, John Power, Jean-Marie Schwitz, Peter Sykes, Bernardo Bertolucci, *In Search Of Anna*.

Number 14 (October 1977)

Phil Noyes, Matt Carroll, Eric Rohmer, Terry Jackson, John Huston, *John's Kingdom, The Last Wave, Blue Fire Lady*.

Number 15 (January 1978) Tom Cowen, Frances Trufant, John Faulkner, Stephen Wallace, the Taviani brothers, Sir Lancelotti, *The Ghost Of Jerome Blackstone*.

Number 16 (April-June 1978) Gennel Lindholm, John Dugan, Steven Spielberg, Tom Jeffery, *The Africa Project*, Swedish cinema, *Dawn, Patrick*.

Number 17 (August-September 1978) Bill Bain, Isabelle Huppert, Brian May, Polish cinema, *Newsweek, The Night The Power*.

Number 18 (October-November 1978) John Linnard, Sema Wong, Alan Tanen, Indian cinema, *Darkback, Gaby's Child*.

Number 19 (January-February 1979) Anthony Geffen, Stanley Hwee, Jeremy Thomas, Andrew Sarno, sponsored documentaries, *Blue Fire*.

Number 20 (March-April 1979) Ken Cameron, Claude Lelouch, Jim Shamsan, French cinema, *My Brilliant Career*.

Number 22 (July-August 1979) Bruce Parry, Luciano Amighi, Alvin Thomas, Steve Alison's *Brilliant*.

Number 24 (December 1979-January 1980) Brian Trinchard-Smith, Ian Holmes, Arthur Hiller, Jerry Teichner, Brazilian cinema, *Variguan*.

Number 25 (February-March 1980) David Putnam, Janet Shoffield, Everett de Roche, Peter Faiman, *Dean Reaction, Sir*.

Number 26 (April-May 1980) Charles H. John, Jerome Holzman, Malcolm Smith, Australian nationalism.

Japanese cinema, Peter Weir, *Motor Under The Bridge*.

Number 27 (June-July 1980) Randal Kleiser, Peter Follmer, Donald Richie, Richard Franklin's debutary of Alfred Hitchcock, the New Zealand film industry, *Greatest Greatest Grand*.

Number 28 (August-September 1980) Bob Godfrey, Dore Kury, Tim Burns, John O Shea, Bruce Beresford, *Bar Young, Roadhouse*.

Number 29 (October-November 1980) Bob Ellis, Uri Weitz, Edward Woodward, Lino Brocka, Stephen Wallace, Philippine cinema, *Crucible, The Last Outlaw*.

Number 30 (February 1982) Kevin Dobson, Brian Kennedy, Sonia Haddad, Michael Rubbo, *Slow Out, Breaker Morant, Baby Meat, The Men From Snowy River*.

Number 37 (April 1982)

Stephen McLaren, Jackie Weaver, Carole Saura, Peter Ustinov, women in drama, *Monkey Gap*.

Number 38 (June 1982) Geoff Burrows, George Miller, James Ivory, Phil Noyes, Jean Forstner, Tony Williams, live and insurance, *For East*.

Number 39 (August 1982) Helen Morse, Richard Mason, Amy Rogers, David Milkin, Derek Goring, Marjorie cinema, National Film Archives, *We Of The River River*.

Number 40 (October 1982) Hans Sachs, Michael Ritchie, Pauline Kael, Wendy Hughes, Ray Barnett, *My Dinner With Andre, The Return Of Captain Invincible*.

Number 41 (December 1982) Igor Agram, Paul Schneider, Peter Tamm, Leliana Cavali, Colin Higgins, *The Year Of Living Dangerously*.

Number 42 (March 1983) Mel Gibson, John Wilson, Ian Pringle, Agnes Varda, copyright, *Shrieked, The Also From Snowy River*.

Number 43 (May-June 1983) Sydney Pollack, Gerry Lawrence, Graham Clifford, *The Shermann, Carol He Night Hear You*.

Number 44-45 (April 1984) David Stevens, Simon Wincer, Susan Lambert, *Street Ales*, a personal history of *Concorde Flies*.

Number 46 (July 1984) Paul Cox, Russell Mulcahy, Alan J. Pakula, Robert Duvall, Jeremy Irons, *Eureka Stacks, Waterfront, The Boy In The Bush, The Woman Within Street News*.

Number 47 (August 1984) Richard Leventhal, Wini Windman, David Embury, Sophia Loren, Hugh Hudson, *Robby Under Arms*.

Number 48 (October-November 1984) Ken Cameron, Michael Pattinson, Jan Sardi, Yvonne Green, *Bodyline, The Silen Goat Movie*.

Number 49 (December 1984)

Alan Rasmid, Brian McKenna, Angela Punch McGrogan, Ernie Macdonald, Jane Campion, honor Mrs. Red Lyons.

Number 50 (February-March 1985) Stephen Wallace, Ian Pringle, Wladimir Borowczyk, Peter Schickel, Bill Conti, Brian May, *The Last Boston Show*.

Number 51 (May 1985) Lino Brocka, Harrison Ford, Norm Macdonald, Susan Mackay, *Enchanted, Winners, The Naked Country, Mad Max, Beyond Thunderdome, Robbery Under Arms*.

Number 52 (July 1985) John Schlesinger, Gillian Armstrong, Alan Parker, soap operas, TV news, *My advertising, Don't Call Me Gink, For Love Alone, Double Struck*.

Number 53 (September 1985) Bryan Brown, Nicolas Kary, Vincent Ward, Hector Crawford, Errol Kaurstine, New Zealand film and television, *Return To Eden*.

Number 54 (November 1985) Greene Clifford, Bob Weir, John Boorman, Wenzham Golan, *Mike And Duke, The Great Escape Robbery, The Lancaster Miller After, rock video*.

Number 55 (January 1986) James Stewart, Debbie Byrne, Brian Thompson, Paul Verhoeven, Derek Haddings, *The Night-Hood Also, Broadway, Swiss marketing*.

Number 56 (March 1986) Fred Schepel, Dennis O'Rourke, Brian Trinchard-Smith, John Hargreaves, stunts, smoke machines, *Dead-End Drive-In, The More Things Change, Kangaroo, Tracy*.

Number 58 (July 1986) Woody Allen, Richard Huff, Orion Writers, the *Cosmetology*, *Francis, The Prisoners, Great Expectations, The Unholy Story and The Last Frontier*.

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 Graham Brown, Garry Sander, Loring
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 ■ **Blade II** John, Bill, Jennifer

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BRING BY FRUIT

play: **Joan Arveds**, *Argents*, Sacramento
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SOME RULES

burn involves the blasting of a Vietnam War Memorial, turning the war dead into blood-crazed minotaurs.

• **Director:** Barrie Pattison, Producer
 Carmelo Muscat, Executive Producer: Len
 Lajovic, Screenplay: Carmelo Muscat,
 Barrie Pattison, Director of Photography:
 Michael Pines, Editor: Tung/Tsun Fui, Pro-
 duction Designer: John Anny, Make-Up:
 John Chuen, Food/Props: Cass John,
 Music: Kipor Lam, Cost: Eddie Lowe,
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Author contact: Evan Wright PhD
Lerner Research Medical Center
Cleveland, Ohio 44106 USA

POSTING THE SET

• Directed and written by Gary Nasty
Producer: James Michael Vernon (Sons
of Photography) Joe Polking (Editor)
America Robinson (Production designer)
Cristina (Crew) Actor: Mike Gary
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NEW ZEALAND AT CANNES

New Zealand has a strong presence at the Cannes film festival with an ever increasing screening, as well as the Australian/New Zealand co-production *The Navigator* (see story p16).

Challenge Corporation has a package of three films: *A Soldier's Tale*, *The Leading Edge* and *Shadows of the Past*. Directed and produced by Larry Perry, *A Soldier's Tale* is set in two-time France and stars Gabriel Byrne as a British soldier who falls in love with a French woman (Miriam Margulies) during a death sentence. In *The Leading Edge* an American helicopter crashes the world's toughest endurance test. It is directed by Mike Porth and produced by Barry Foran. The goldfish of Central Europe in 1990 are the backing to *Shadows of the Past*, a story of two Chinese women striving to improve their lot. Produced by Don Reynolds and directed by Leon Narby, it is an official co-contrast with the Chinese Co-production Corporation, and stars Susan Fan, who made 15 films in Beijing before landing in Australia.

In Miami, director Martin Munn set out to present "the Maori perspective of the world". That is a predominantly Maori community on the North Island's East Coast,



Shadows of the Past

it is about an escaped convict who assumes the identity of a dead man. Co-produced with Munn is Geoff Murphy, with whom she worked as actor and cultural adviser on *Die*.

Soul of a Girl is the first feature from Donatien Foubert's Pacific company. Directed by Melrose Road (Fred Fow), it is a comedy about three women who work for a newspaper in a remote area. It stars Patsy Fanny, Katherine McKinnon and Gerald McEneaney.

Soul of a Girl, directed and pro-



A Soldier's Tale

duced by Peter Jackson, combines Maori history, horror and science fiction in a story of a ghost seeking human flesh for an over-galactic blood cult.

CONTACTS:

- **New Zealand Film Commission:** David Gillingham, 411 North Lindsay Street, P.O. Box 1000, Auckland 1010, New Zealand. Tel: 09 308 3000.
- **Challenge Corporation:** Larry Perry, P.O. Box 1000, Auckland 1010, New Zealand. Tel: 09 308 3000.

■ **Energy Source International:** Peter Barry, 100, St. Thomas, 140 Leinster Apartments, Rue Henri, Paris, France.

■ **Film Investment Corp. of NZ:** Gary Henson, Woodford Ward, John Maynard.

■ **Pathfinders:** Donatien Foubert, Melrose Road, Kaituma, Moffat.

■ **Wingtip Productions:** Peter Jackson, Tony Hill.

■ **South Pacific Distributors:** Kerry Roberts, Graham Mullen.

■ **New Zealand's market stand in the Palais:** Number 20.

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Lyn McCarthy: Candy Cinema, Palais Lumiere.

Mark Minton: CML Films.

Mark Peck: Mark Peck Communications, Chemin de la Gare, Cannes.

Anthony L. Gennaro: International Film Management, Hotel du Cap.

Barbara McMahon: International Film Management.

Richard Byrnes: Smiley Films, Hotel Galle.

Jill Greenidge: Smiley Films, Hotel Galle.

Paul Appleby: Green Wash Productions.

Robert Macdonald: Quantum Films.

Andrea Pinsky: producer, *Alfred To Dance*.

Al Clarke: Beyond Limited.

Rita Lundy: Rita Lundy Marketing, 15 rue des Belges.

Evan English: Outlaw Video Marketing.

John Maynard: producer, *The Navigator*, *Soliel Mediaman*.

Vincent Ward: director, *The Navigator*, *Soliel Mediaman*.

Scott Hicks: The Red Film Co, Chemin de la Gare.

James Vanson: Cannes 1990.

Rox Watson: *Sons Of Steel*.

Gary Keady: director, *Sons Of Steel*.

Rob Hartley: *Sons Of Steel*.

Lionel Mulford: Lionel Mulford, Putney, Hotel Mandel.

Phillip Brinkley: Philip Brinkley Productions, Hotel Roc.

Tom Broadbent: Premier Film Marketing, Apartment 107, 52 La Croisette.

Patrick Jullien: *Boundaries Of The Heart*, *The La Le Film*.

Wendy Hughes: *Boundaries Of The Heart*.

John Seaton: Outlook.

Frank Hudson: Boulevard Films.

Peter Boyle: Boulevard Films.

David Parker: Cascade Films.

Nicki Tate: Cascade Films.

Germine Mucci: CM Film Productions.

Phillip Aronson: Avalon Film, Hotel Concord.

Bryan Manning: Seen Film Productions, 10 rue des Belges.

David Jewery: Platypus Productions, Acapulco Hotel.

Alan Stiles: Screen Keys Film.

John Gargill: JD Productions, Hotel Galle.

Shane Hogg: Carbon Movie House, Hotel Galle.

Rolyn Watts: Film Australia, Hotel Galle.

Rae Saunders: Film Australia, Hotel Galle.

Richard Tait: Idea En Scene.

Patricia Luedke: Idea En Scene.

Sam Murray: Australian Film Commission, Hotel Suisse.

Gary Hamilton: Australian Film Commission, Hotel Suisse.

Victoria Trope: Australian Film Commission, Hotel Montclair.

Philip Adams: Australian Film Commission, Hotel Montclair.

Presanna Vasanthan: Australian Film Commission, Hotel Suisse.

Selena Greenley: Australian Film Commission, Hotel Montclair.

John Richardson: Realist Film International Ltd, La Residence, Ave Albert.

Chris Wickens: Unlimited Vision, Hotel Athenes.

Nicola Miller: Sherrill Films, Gay D'Alban Hotel.

Chris Oliver: producer, *Contact*.

David Hannay: producer, *Je Suis ALN*, ALN Associates, Carlin Hotel.

Rose Colomine: Lion's Den Productions.

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Kate Kirby: J.C. Williamson.

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Rae O'Neill: managing director, Hays Entertainment.

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A total of 83 features, miniseries and telefeatures were produced in the hectic 1987 calendar period with budgets totalling nearly \$195 million. This represents an increase of about \$20 million from the previous year.

One trend at the bottom end of the economic scale is the emergence of low-budget features shot on videotape and aimed at the video market (Brian Basset: *Hot for The Beach*).

The expanding increase in telefeature production is likely to become a continuing trend due to the present uncertain state of feature financing, forcing producers to take on low-risk projects which can quickly recoup costs, either as television pilots and in rare instances, make a successful cinema release in the tradition of *Fox and The Year My Voice Broke*.

One significant factor in the increased production activity is the presence of small title packages such as the Australian Children's Television Foundation Touch The Sun series (producer James Vernon's *Tomorrow's News* comprising eight school-oriented telefeatures), and several low-budget horror features assembled by producer David Hamney.

The ABC continues to increase its involvement with various co-producers (Smiley Films: *Nowon 66*).

Budget figures displayed in the charts have been supplied to Cinema Papers by producers. Where producers did not want budgets published, these productions are marked N/A in the budget column. In most cases budgets were supplied off the record¹, enabling the accurate computing of overall figures and averages.

THEATRICAL FEATURES

Total number produced: 43
Total budget: \$110,293,000
Average budget: \$2,567,279

MINISERIES

Total number produced: 12
Total budget: \$28,350,000
Average budget: \$3,275,166

TELEFEATURES

Total number produced: 28
Total budget: \$20,400,000
Average budget: \$1,226,000

Paul Hewitt

THEATRICAL FEATURES

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
<i>After To Dance</i> (Goldist Pty Ltd/Andrew Finlay/Deeny Lowmire)	N/A	September
<i>An Time Goes By</i> (Monroe State/Chris Kelly/John Peay)	N/A	April
<i>Backlash</i> (Ciel) (Yara Bank Film Pty Ltd/Wend Lambert/Blake Newman)	\$333,000	March
<i>Body Heat</i> (Smiley Films Pty Ltd for International Film Management/LeifRichard Brown/Mark Joffe)	\$2,400,000	October
<i>Boysen of Broken Dreams</i> (Boysen Film/Fresh Horowitz/Phil Anselmi)	N/A	August
<i>Boundaries Of The Heart</i> (The La La Film for International Film Management/Ludovic Audet/in Monaco)	\$2,500,000	September
<i>Brain Blast</i> (The Midway Entertainment Corporation/Daphne Goodwin/Mady Naly)	N/A	September
<i>Breaking Loose</i> (Avision Films/Pat Avision/Mad Ray)	N/A	October
<i>Bushfire Moon</i> (Interwest/Smiley Film Ltd/Peter Smiley, Robert La Te/George Miller)	N/A	May
<i>Candy Claws</i> (Forum Green Film Studio Pty Ltd/Forum Green/Glen Davis)	N/A	August
<i>Compo</i> (Sonic Picture Co./Ager/Barrie/Ager/Barrie)	\$150,000	October
<i>Content</i> (The Hu Picture Pty Ltd/Chris Olszewsky/Collegory)	N/A	October
<i>Contagion</i> (Kier Film/Lidia/Barrie, Ken Mitchell/Kier/Barrie)	N/A	June
<i>Crescent Dances II</i> (Kakadu Pty Ltd/Kier/Donnell/John Gorm)	N/A	August
<i>Dangerous Game</i> (Nigel Productions/Justin West, David Appleby/Darren Hopkins)	\$5,000,000	October
<i>The Day Of The Panther</i> (Nigel Productions, PWT Studios, The Mandar Group/Darren Penrose/Brian Traversch/Smith)	N/A	March
<i>Dead Cain</i> (Kennedy Miller/George Miller, Terry Hayes, Douglas Mitchell/George Miller)	N/A	—
<i>Get In Good</i> (Mid Hollywood) (Forum Green Film Studio Pty Ltd/Forum Green/Norm Davis)	N/A	November
<i>The Greeting</i> (Kinema Film Pty Ltd for International Film Management/ColCamp/John Wayne Green/Melinda Anderson)	\$2,000,000	October
<i>The Evolving Secret Family</i> (Sonic Picture Film Pty Ltd for International Film Management/LudMichael Stewart, Stan Genter/Michael Stewart)	\$2,000,000	February
<i>Hot Angels</i> (Jed Angels Film Pty Ltd/Wend Lambert/Wend Schepke)	N/A	October
<i>Power</i> (Kinema Film Pty Ltd/Tony Jennings/ColCamp/Leah)	N/A	February
<i>Ghosts Of The Civil Dead</i> (Continental Services Inc./Alan English/John Milnes)	\$1,100,000	August
<i>Hungry Heart</i> (Lionel Dan Productions for Greenac/Lisa/Colleen Ray/Melinda/John Roberts)	N/A	August
<i>Incident At Raven's Gate</i> (Argosley Pty Ltd for International Film Management/LudMic Rosenberg, Neil de Heer/Neil de Heer)	\$2,000,000	June
<i>Alled</i> (Merrill Beach Productions/Bill Bennett, Jerry Dagill/Bennett)	N/A	February
<i>Katinka</i> (David Hamney Productions Pty Ltd/David Hamney, Charles Hamney/James Rogers)	N/A	November
<i>The Man From Irony River II</i> (Snowy Two Productions/Glen Bennett/ColCamp/Barrie)	\$2,100,000	March
<i>The Man Who Lost His Head</i> (Clear Film/Daniel Clayton/James Clayton)	N/A	November
<i>McHenry</i> (Miles Film International) Pty Ltd for International Film Management/Lud Howard/Grigory/Don McLennan)	\$2,000,000	November
<i>Out Of The Body</i> (David Hamney Productions Pty Ltd/David Hamney, Charles Hamney/Chris Rogers/Brian Traversch/John Roberts/Brian)	N/A	November
<i>Outback</i> (John Saxton Productions Pty Ltd for Spectrum Film Group Pty Ltd and International Film Management/Lidia/Barrie/Barrie)	\$7,000,000	September
<i>Paradise</i> (P/M Productions Pty Ltd/Alex Cullen, Maysa Amos/Nigel Roberts)	N/A	January
<i>Black And Red</i> (Kinema Film/Melinda Tess, David Foster/Karla Tess)	\$4,000,000	August
<i>Rebellion And The Sparrow</i> (The Kira Film Co./Ludovic Hays/Scott Hays)	\$700,000	August
<i>Sons Of Steel</i> (Jed Film/James Vernon/Dary Brady)	N/A	November
<i>The Strike</i> (J The Panther) (Nigel Productions, TM Studios, The Mandar Group/Darren Penrose/Brian Traversch/Smith)	N/A	March
<i>Takeover</i> (Philip Emanuel Productions/Philip Emanuel/Rob Marchand)	N/A	September
<i>The Thirteenth Floor</i> (David Hamney Productions Pty Ltd/David Hamney, Charles Hamney/Chris Rogers)	N/A	November
<i>Two Brothers Running</i> (Philip Emanuel Productions/Philip Emanuel/Phil Roberts)	N/A	August
<i>Where The Outback Ends</i> (Sonic Film in association with Pulse Film Pty Ltd/Peter Bennett/Barrie)	\$1,500,000	November
<i>The Year My Voice Broke</i> (Kennedy Miller/Terry Hayes, George Miller, Douglas Mitchell/George Miller)	N/A	—
<i>Zorala Brigade</i> (CM Film Productions/Gerardo Huaco/Gerardo Huaco)	N/A	November

M I N I S E R I E S

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
The Alien Yeller (Perkins, ABC, Revolution Film Pty Ltd/Harry Alden/David Cronley)	\$4,000,000	August
Always Afternoon (Afternoon Pictures Pty Ltd/Henry Crawford/David Stevens)	\$4,000,000	March
The Outcasts (Dynamis (Kennedy Miller/George Miller, Terry Haynes, Douglas Mitchell/Mike Cameron producer/Michael Jenkins, John Pearce)	N/A	—
Geary (Pearl Film (International) Ltd/John Richardson/Colin Budd)	N/A	January
Emma (Lisa Productions Pty Ltd for Multi Film Investments Ltd/Neil Mathews, Ann Chapman/Gil Smiley)	\$3,000,000	October
Fields Of Fire — The Sequel (Palm Beach Pictures (PBC) Pty Ltd/David Clark, Irene Koro/David Ellis Reid Mathews)	\$2,700,000	October
Wish You Were Here (Perkins Productions Pty Ltd/Neil Pearce/Drew)	\$2,000,000	July
Paul Man's Orange (Anthony Buckley Productions/Anthony Buckley/George Whaley)	N/A	February
Spir McPhee (Perkins Productions Pty Ltd in association with Nimrod Film/Neil Pearce/Marcus Cole)	\$2,000,000	September
Sugar And Spice (Li Productions Ltd/Frank Brown, John Gaus/John Gaus)	\$2,000,000	September
Stranger (ABC, McClean International/John Edwards/Kathy Wheeler, Chris Thomas, Alan Cameron)	N/A	August
The True Believers (Roadshow, Code and Carol, ABC/Matt Carroll, Brenda Lacy/Peter Fox)	\$3,000,000	August

T E L E F E A T U R E S

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
The Board Room (Palm Film Pty Ltd/Paula Koro/Brian Phillips)	N/A	August
Captain Jack (J. R. Holdings Productions for ACTV/Alan Gallen/Tony/Mike Andreasson)	N/A	September
Colonel Cavendish (Somerset Film Productions/Alan Tyrrell, James Vernon/Rob Stewart)	N/A	—
Crestedtail (Somerset Film Productions/Alan Tyrrell, James Vernon/Marcus Cole)	N/A	—
The Clean Machine (Kennedy Miller/George Miller, Terry Haynes, Douglas Mitchell/Mike Cameron)	N/A	—
Contagion (Film Australia)—(Jan Mann)	\$200,000	April
Devil's Hill (Sydney Entertainment Pty Ltd, ACTV/Mat Rodden/Steven Storey)	N/A	November
The Gift (Eurovision Film for ACTV/Tony Linearity/James Paul Cole)	N/A	November
Hot Ice (Palm Film Pty Ltd/Michael Barrett/Mat Phillips)	N/A	September
Knuckle (Somerset Film Productions/Alan Tyrrell, James Vernon/Lee Mitchell)	N/A	May
The Kokoda Trail Of Damien Price (Kennedy Miller/George Miller, Terry Haynes, Douglas Mitchell—)	N/A	—
The Litert Ring (ABC in association with Revcom/Lan Chapman/Geoffrey Notting)	N/A	February
A Matter Of Convenience (ABC in association with Revcom/Neil Price/Dan Levin)	N/A	March
Olve (ABC, ABC, Sydney Film/Richard Brennan, Julie Morton/Stephen Wallace)	N/A	May
Outback Vampires (Somerset Film Productions/Alan Tyrrell, James Vernon/Colin Appleton)	N/A	February
Peter And Pauline (Kiss Film Pty Ltd, ACTV/Margot McDonald/Michael Gervin)	N/A	June
Plate (Henry Remington, Doreen/Monique Schreier)	\$575,000	March
Pigs Will Fly (Somerset Film Productions/Alan Tyrrell, James Vernon/Sophie Turkesson)	N/A	January
Princess Kate (Lithwick Film Pty Ltd for ACTV/Melanie Bennett/George Ogilvie)	N/A	September
Raid And Rail Cowboys (Somerset Film Productions/Alan Tyrrell, James Vernon/Rob Stewart)	N/A	April
Sisterly Love (Australian Screen Associates/Peter De Ceresa/Matt de Pass)	N/A	September
Topend (Sydney Entertainment Pty Ltd, ACTV/Mat Rodden/Jackie McKinnon)	N/A	August
Tudor (Screen Film/Peter Hansen/John Gaus/Gavin Jodrell)	\$700,000	March
A Walk Through The Walls (Meridian Films/Paul Harris, Rex Berry/Tony/Frank Arnold)	\$1,000,000	October
The Bubble Of The Blister (Kennedy Miller/George Miller, Terry Haynes, Douglas Mitchell/Chris Noonan)	N/A	—

*Produced (or to be produced) for the local market and/or overseas for foreign markets.

C O - P R O D U C T I O N S

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
The Navigator (Dynamis Pty Ltd, Film Investment Corporation of NZ/John Maynard/Michael Ward)	\$4,000,000	July
Down And Under (Proimage Television Pty Ltd in association with Afterlife/Patricia-Louise/Christopher Searcy/Rob Stewart)	N/A	December
The First Kangaroo (Roadshow, Code and Carol, Channel 4/Neils Isidor/Frank Dittmarowich)	\$3,400,000	March
Always Afternoon (Afternoon Pictures Ltd/Henry Crawford/David Stevens)	\$4,000,000	March
Miniseries commissioned by SBS Television and pre-sold to German Television		

R·E·V·I·E·W·S

- Broadcast News
- The Dead
- The Everlasting Secret Family
- The Good Father
- House Of Games
- The Man From Snowy River II
- Wall Street
- Warm Nights On A Slow Moving Train
- Wings Of Desire

● THE EVERLASTING SECRET FAMILY

When a film is decided by its first public vote so much relies on *The Everlasting Secret Family* has been, then it is a sure sign that the work warrants a second look. Unfortunately this may not be possible, for its critical failure will probably sentence it to a short life. This latest collaboration of Frank Moorhouse and Michael Thornhill has been dismissed as "confused, ineptible and amateurish", "sadly misconceived" and "a laboured adaptation" which "fails to work on any level." It has certainly proved to be genuinely, if not fashionably, provocative.

In fact what have been named as its failings are also its points of significance. Certainly, the film's intentions are not always clear. It seems to slip in and out of various thematic and stylistic positions, moving at different times around the edges of melodrama, irony, serious drama and high camp. It provides no reason for doing so. Intended by Moorhouse to be a construction of an imaginary, metaphorical world, it has been seen by others as superficial and reticent. With no prior knowledge of its critical reception I read *The Everlasting Secret Family* as a refreshingly idiosyncratic irony and was entertained and amazed — sometimes by my own amazement.

The confusion surrounding the work can be read as proof of its makers' aptitude and a reason to dismiss it. But confusion surrounding a new work of art, regardless of its authors' intentions, is a useful stimulant, a sign that makes us begin to ask and reason enough to deem *The Everlasting Secret Family* worthy of more attention than it has been paid.

The most obvious task the filmmakers took was the subject matter they chose. The erotic (or pornographic) is notable by its absence from Australian literature and film. We have preferred to enjoy our location in exotic overseas landscapes, rather than to deal with the subject on our home ground, as if our shyness to take it, and our arousal, seriously has depended on the subject's placement elsewhere. Australian film still sees itself as the home of the real — and while exceptions have been made into the apertures (*Phantoms of the Moving Bed*) and bizarre (*Bliss*, *The Cow That Ate Paul*) the shadowy repressions of the erotic and Gothic imaginations have been kept behind closed doors. Thornhill's film is

the first major attempt to reveal such an imaginary world.

A rich and charming senator, played with wonderful irony by Arthur Dignam, is a member of a secret and rigidly hierarchical society of pretty youths and powerful men controlled by the conjunctions of ritual, discipline and black sexual. "Money, secrecy, silence" is the Brotherhood's motto. The fantasy, like pornography itself, is corrupt and distasteful. When it is placed in the context of an Australian version of an upper class, it seems particularly difficult to accept. The masked brothers, appearing over crossed swords beneath a canopy of roses, look like they'd be more at home on the Spanish court.

But rather than rejecting this charmless in the film, it is more useful to consider in what ways it reveals the problems in portraying the particular conditions of the erotic/Gothic/pornographic imaginations in Australian context. Considered as a seriously dramatic study, the film appears amateurish. However, if we see it as an attempt to depart from filmic conventions commonly associated with an Australian style of realism, it becomes a cause for celebration.

The film's rhythm is jerky and irregular. Scenes are drawn out to unrealistic lengths or cut short by unexpected fades to black. Dialogue is deliberately stilted and punctuated by dramatic silences and silences. The Lover's narration is pure purple. The song is mannered and some of the characters in green enough flesh and blood to invite audience sympathy. With the exception of the chauffeur, no one is named.

The characters' distance from each other (their interactions seemed more cinematic than real) and ourselves gives them a quirky kind of poise and an the space to detect irony.

The beautiful Lover coquettishly lifts his chin before the Senator seated in his Senator's chair and says, "Do you think my hair has dropped?" The Senator is silent. The Lover repeats his question. The Senator poses. He lightly caresses his chin with graceful fingers. "Your hair," he replies, dead-pan. There is another pause. He tells the Lover to go and put his pants on. The scene abruptly ends. It is ironic and anti-erotic. It is mannered and unusual. It is not meant to be real.

Sometimes, however, one isn't quite sure and this makes *The Everlasting Secret*



FAMILY TIES: Heather Graham and Paul Giamatti

with its known and anticipated effects on the general economy has demonstrated the importance of these issues to the wider community.

The weak link in the film is Bud Fox. At no time does he generate any genuine support with any of the other characters or the audience. As he slowly comes to a realisation of what Gekko really represents and how he has allowed himself to be used and corrupted, he is meant to appear a somewhat tragic figure: a heroically doomed kid exposed to unnatural stresses and temptations. But the dramatic potential is never really developed; it rapidly deteriorates into melodrama.

The character of Gekko is much more finely drawn and Michael Douglas gives a first-rate performance. But as Charlie Sheen's defence, Douglas is given much better material to work with. Stanley Weiser and Scorsese (who were responsible for the script) display more insight into the single-minded ruler than the confused and grasping young broker. This is borne out with the strong characterisation of another ruler, Sir Larry Wildman (Lawrence Sanjuro) whose confrontation with Gekko is a highlight.

Wall Street, for all its faults, provides a

fascinating glimpse into the world of high finance and the managements, some would say rip-off merchants, who have been pushing us destiny. And there is no doubt that despite their glibness, these larger-than-life characters have a certain anarchistic appeal.

Tom Skerrett

WALL STREET Directed by Oliver Stone. Producer: Edward H. Zwickman. Co-producers: A. Curtis and Christopher. Chief Story: Barry Weiser. Director of Photography: Robert Richardson. Product on Design: Stephen Hershenson. Music: Samuel. Costume Designer: Diane Schuman. Cast: Charles Sheen (Bud Fox), Michael Douglas (Jensen Gekko), Stanley Weiser (Sir Larry Wildman), Lawrence Sanjuro (Sir Larry Wildman), Sean Young (Gloria Gekko), Gary Hershorn (Garth Upson). Production Company: Miramax II. Production Production: Daily Leader Fox Columbia. Screen: USA movies USA 1987.

• WINGS OF DESIRE

The first strange sound even in *Wings Of Desire* (the black and white close up of a hand writing on a page) introduces us to levels both mystically abstract — philosophical ideas concerning life, manhood, being, soul, love — and immediately concrete: the texture of materials (voice, paper, pen) and the precision of their creative transcription onto film. It's hard enough to speak adequately of the abstract levels — so sensitive, gentle

and brave — and so easy to consume: oneself rhetorically defending them against an army of inbred and misanthropic critics, that even the loudest lover of the film might never touch, or truly to its formal beauty and greatness. Perhaps the viewer should proceed to *Wundern* first, slowly and surely — from the trembling detail in the heterogeneous white, from the tedious fragility to the profound gentility. This too short review offers only one moment and a few ideas from *Wings Of Desire*.

As the soundtrack of the film and the tragedy of its characters, two angels invisible to mortal eyes, *Desire* (Bruno Ganz) and *Cassiel* (Otto Sander), inside the Berlin Wall. *Desire* is about to cross over into mortal life, in search of the experience of earthly love, and a woman, Maria (Solveig Dommartin). As the two men talk for the last time, music of another world suddenly erupts on the surface of the film: a burst of colour, a burst of music. *Desire* has left his wings on the snow. A lateral camera movement sweeps out gaze back to the right — a routine police patrol is making place — and then black, now *Cassiel* holds the lamp body of *Desire* in his arms. The second movement of the film begins.

There is a cinema of twilight, a cinema of half love, half love. This cinema, unobscuredly belongs to the person with eyes at the window, key-hole or movie screen — the stranger in paradise. Quietly passive, the stranger is list watches and listens and thinks himself, and he is the person. There is an "beyond" to which death might release the stranger, the music of earthly, earthly life, just over there, in all the heaven one could ever desire. The cinema of *Wings* *Wundern*, up to and including *Pain*, *Time*, is perhaps the singular contemporary embodiment of a twilight vision, passed and as one remove. The first half of *Wings Of Desire* as black and white surrealist *Wundern* story is far. The angels are metaphors for the condition of half life. As the virtual eyes and ears of the cinematic apparatus, they provide of this especially poignant half life which is the lot of filmmaker and film spectator alike: to see and hear all, with particular clarity and beauty, yet never to touch life or intervene in its unfolding.

Raymond Douglas said of *Wundern* in the case of *Pain*, *Time* (in *Studio Two* national December, 1985), "Finally, perhaps, he is a Romantic as ancient as Henry James modern themes mark the poetic spirit of the *Egoistic Sublime*". The "modern themes" sketched in the first few minutes of *Wings Of Desire* — a cinema of urban alienation, fragmentation, dissolution — indeed provide only the "ground" for the transcendence that later eventually brings to the end, solitary eye (*Cassiel* at one point even releases a lateral cry of "poetic angst")? The film agrees to a veritable transfiguration — from half life to full life, reflection to action, twilight



Not visible

ACTOR! ACTOR!

• **THE INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF FILMS AND FILMMAKERS: ACTORS AND ACTRESSES** edited by James Vernon (Moonshine, 1986, ISBN 0 287 42026 6, cnp £33 pb)

• **BRANDO: THE UNAUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY** by Charles Higham (Seymour & Jackson/Macmillan, 1987, ISBN 0 287 55551 7, cnp £19.95 hb)

• **CHARLOTTE SAMPLING: WITH COMPLIMENTS** Introduction by Dirk Bogarde (Quarry, 1987, ISBN 0 7043 2642 4, cnp £6.95 pb)

• **MICKY ROUSKE** by Ben Mills (Seymour & Jackson/Macmillan, 1986, ISBN 0 287 26526 3, cnp £19.95 pb)

FOUR very different books about actors ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. *The International Dictionary of Films and Filmmakers* is the latter, the third volume in a very useful series: 670 pages of entries from Abbott to Zeno, Doo, each with brief biographical details, a list of roles, including the name of the character played, a bibliography, and an evocative essay from a critic or academic (we get the likes of Robert Wood, Stuart M. Kaminsky, Jeanne Rosenberg, Anthony Slide and Roger Moore). The last includes not only British, American and European actors, but also a fine sprinkling of East European and Asian performers.

As a research tool, that is obviously dense and detailed, and the biographies in particular will be an excellent resource. There are a few samplings — Katherine Hepburn, Robert De Niro, *The Dirty Dozen* Frank, for example — which are a little unwelcome to find.

The evocative essays vary in approach and interest — not surprising with the number of different writers engaged on the project. It's not just a question of taste, although that is obviously a factor. Ernst Langman is one of the shrewdest critics, with four pacy paragraphs, while some of the more experienced stylists achieve the compression usually displayed by those columnists who write the *Lord's Prayer* on a postage stamp, and can do wonders with 500 words. None of them achieve the suggestive brevity of a work like David Thomson's *Biographical Dictionary of The Cinema*, but that is not the kind of work that this dictionary sets out to be.

What does it say about the subjects of these other books? Mickey Rourke doesn't make it in all. Neither does Charlotte Sampling. And Brando? According to Stephen L. Hanson, "His delinquency of his childhood in those early films is unique representative of the individuality of American identity through his own interpretation of mythic acting caused him to be regarded as a 'sampling slab' by a number of film critics. His psychological approach to establishing a character does, in fact,



Charlton Heston

build upon heretic (not necessarily meaningful) speech patterns that hint at a suppressed power that can abruptly burn down any volcano." For Hanson, it is the revolutionary spirit of Zeno that is the key to Brando's later roles, even *Jerusalem*.

In Charles Higham's unauthorized biography, *Five Zepherus* is the movie where Marlon Brando lost his contact lenses, brought his mecon on set, didn't have an affair with Jean Peters and didn't get on particularly well with Anthony Quinn.

The book depends on the book on "richly anecdotal" which is a generous way of saying that it has been able to interview a lot of people who have worked with or known Marlon Brando and they have not been able to tell him anything that adds up to very much. Some of the stories of Brando's childhood are interesting when related to his monologue in *Last Tango in Paris* but apart from the "richly anecdotal" material, we have to deal with sentences like, "When he was led into someone's psyche he left his mark forever", "Only Gena Kelly is immortal enough to be regarded as a revolutionary in style", "The record of Marlon during Maria Schneider's underpinnings as he mounted her stated scenes shook waves".

Mickey Rourke, whose subject has also been fond of having speech patterns, could not be described as richly anecdotal. It is a book for a film, an unembarrassed patchwork quilt of quotations, quotes from reviews, bits from interviews and plenty of photos. It's an efficient and well-made job.

Charlotte Sampling is one of the few actresses for whom Rourke has had a good word. *Charlotte Sampling: With Compliments*, is short on good words itself, it has a conclusion from Nagas Chandra, 'Calligraphy for Charlotte Sampling' (not translated) and a brief 'portrait' from Dirk Bogarde, but the bulk of this expensive, slender book is photographs, from her model portfolio in 1960 to recent poses at Cannes to stills from *The Night Porter* to Helmut Newton portraits. On virtually every page, her eyes dominate the image. Dirk Bogarde calls her pose "the Look" and refers to "the power of those wonderful eyes, green, wide, appalled", adding, "I have seen the glowing emerald eyes change to steel within a second, or, on the other hand, fade gently and be softest, tenderest, most deliriously broken between when, in the company of her husband, her children, very close friends, she has taken her place as 'Mother' at a family celebration." Fortunately, in most cases her gaze is considerably more eloquent. As this book unfolds, it's a shame that the sublime possibilities of the Look have not been dealt with better, by writers or filmmakers.

Philippe Houlter



Marlon Brando

Mickey Rourke

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The Untouchables (Morricone)	\$16.99 (LP)
The Witches Of Eastwick (Williams)	\$16.99 (LP)
	\$33.00 (CD)
Three O'Clock High (Tangenne Dream)	\$19.99 (LP)
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in technology and

design.

TELEVISION station promotion identis, the short, 10-to-15 second animated logos accompanied by the station's theme music, leap out at us every hour or more, cutting through the mias of station colour-cue announcements over the end credits of programs, ads, and promotions for forthcoming programs. If they are good, we watch them with interest. After a time, they become a familiar visual background that we just absorb without thinking.

Because of the repetition, the logos have traditionally relied on visual complexity to maintain viewer interest, and as soon as computer-controlled film animation became readily available, the streaks, glows and blurs look over our screens. Animation houses everywhere added computer controls to their animation stands to capitalise on the fad for logos soaring up into position leaving trails, and edges with sparkling highlights.

Soon true computer-generated graphics became the easiest way to provide the movement and gloss within the disciplines that the advertising agencies wanted. In addition, broadcast television certainly didn't want to look any less exciting than the ad breaks. The easiest

method of obtaining these effects was to buy a package from one of the US networks and "insert your logo here". There were rumblings from the local production houses but they were silenced by the statement that "we didn't have the technology to do it here", and in most cases that was true. But the times have changed, along with the station logos, and there are now enough facilities with state-of-the-art equipment and creative talents to drive them to satisfy any client interested in getting a competitive result.

This year's crop of logos should be a turning point in the design for Australian television broadcasting and in particular the new station identity that The Video Paint Brush Co. (VPR) has produced for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. It is a sophisticated blend of illustrated and retouched photographic backgrounds with some excellent natural texture photos by Mark Lurgi, 35mm movie film shot by John Chik, and the infinitesimal wave ABC symbol in the most realistic of glass 3D graphics. The technical background to this production is the basis of this article but there is a wider implication that I would like to see discussed.

BICENTENNIAL MYOPIA

It is a reflection of the schizophrenic nature of Australian broadcasting that in spite of the stated intention of each of the stations to give us a service that reflects our local, even regional identity, some of them continue to slavishly copy the American station promos and idents, even using the same music intros for news etc. A traveller from the States would be quite at home, if a little amused.

Sometimes this amusement is carried to ridiculous extremes. One of the pre-Bicentennial projects that I was involved in was a request to adapt a US network promo which was a dramatically lit motion control camera move around the Statue of Liberty, choreographed to a score by John Williams for which the Australian network had the rights. The local version was to be, well for it, a statue of Captain Cook holding his telescope under one arm — a statue that has been quietly doubling away in a Sydney park. Hardly a national icon like the Statue of Liberty, we suggested. Mercifully, someone must have agreed, because I haven't seen it on air. At least they did ask an Australian company to quote on it, but it illustrates the point almost to absurdity.

TACK



ANIMATED LOGO

Jeri Blomfield, Nine Network's promotions manager, recently agreed to the need to invest in some Australian research and development. "If we are going to get the industry going," he said, "we must expect that some funds go towards R&D." However, Lorraine Willson, Ten Network's creative director, felt that the corporate "new image", the K and TEN logo designed by Carl Reedham, would be best produced by California Film, a specialist broadcast design house in the US. The resulting glass look was computer animated at a company called Rhythmic and Hums in Los Angeles. Willson said, "We felt the best technical back-up at that time could be obtained in the US for the production of the network ID." However she was quick to add, "we use local facilities for a whole range of back-up pieces — in particular, we are currently working with Sonoscreen."

Seven Network also went offshore to US designer Harry Marks for its new ID. Graham Donald, Seven's promo director, explained that Marks preferred to work with Pacific Data Images in the US and commented that, "Unfortunately, it makes the price a bit high because of the exchange rate." The "Let's celebrate '88" and red, white

and blue background with Southern Cross stars maintains the 7 within a circle but adds some patriotism for the Bicentennial year. Like Ten, however, the network needs the back-up from local companies for the everyday promo material. The Video Paint Brush Co. has produced some of this material, with most of the ideas and variations coming from Custom Video in Sydney. Steven's video production facility, Donald admits that there is competition between networks to produce the best station ident, feeling that it was important to have a "clever" image and higher profile than the country stations. "Although," he added, "I don't know how much the viewers care."

To me it's surprising that, at a time when the call to develop our Australian industry is thought to be the only way we can survive economically, two of the four major networks don't consider it a priority. This is even more mystifying as it is the commercial television stations that make their money from the advertising dollars of Australian manufacturers and Government campaigns such as "True Blue". The Nine network and the ABC are to be congratulated. And the ABC must be particularly happy about its decision

DESIGNING FOR A SMALL SCREEN

While Technicalities is tuned more to the hardware side of the film and television industry, there are a number of points about the design of the new ABC station promos that are of interest. I should say that I have worked with most of the staff of VPR over the years and have a bias toward their "design before technology" approach, even if it often seemed a waste of talent to have a designer coming home by home maths shapes on a commercial job.

If my own bias is evident then it's not surprising that the ABC awarded The Video Paint Brush Co. Sydney the task of completely redesigning the station "look". Almost everyone working on the project had at one time worked at the ABC.

Creative director Michael Murry set up the ABC graphics department's first Quixel Paintbox. As the national art director for ABC News, he became very familiar with the Quixel hardware. In 1985 he joined Stephen Smith, the general manager, to start The Video Paint Brush Co. Sydney in a small room next to the ABC in Artarmon.

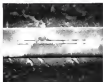
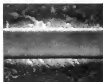
The other designers

involved in the ABC project include Lynne Cartwright, who as a senior designer at the ABC later awarded for her title designs for *Sweet & Sour*, *Dancing Queen* and *Edge Of The Wedge*. Now at VPR, she is working with the head of design David Patton. Patton was one of the early pioneers of computer aided systems in the US and has a creditable list of Emmy and other design awards. The producer on the project was Graeme Gable, who spent 10 years at the ABC and was head of promotions and special projects producer there.

In all they created an environment that the ABC would certainly feel comfortable with, and a strong knowledge of the needs of the Corporation. It also demonstrates that with no other source of designers, trained in digital hardware such as the Paintbox, the broadcast stations have provided the best training ground for the commercial computer graphics production companies being established around the country.

IS THERE ART IN BROADCASTING?

Michael Murry asked the question at the launch of the new designs at the ABC, deciding that "Art is an irony" >



in broadcasting. Its creation is by nature a slow and painstaking process. While broadcasting has fine-tuned its ability to be instantaneous, broadcast design has essentially remained in the dark ages. Using traditional tools, it has struggled to keep up with the demands for immediacy and speed. Computer graphics is a simple matter of broadcast design existing up.

"However, the challenge of designing for television has not been diluted by the array of solutions the new technology presents. In fact the problems have been complicated by the temptations of movement and surface gloss as easy solutions for every problem."

This has led, he said, "to ignoring a good many of the classical areas of design in favour of what is available with the latest software or in vogue overviews. This has manifested itself in a style of design which has a tendency towards the interpolate: the super real or grandiose. The concept of shadows floating in space will inevitably go the way of the ubiquitous 'grid' of a few years ago. The important thing is to replace it with a new approach to design itself, rather than another one-off solution for any problem."

The new design explores the possibilities of more combinations of technology, although not necessarily always high tech. We use live action film, photography, illustration, typography and collage with computer animation and an arsenal of where these types of solutions will apply.

In the new ABC series of productions they have found the balance.

NUTS AND BOLTS IN THREE DIMENSIONS

Chris Godfrey is head of 3D

design at The Video Paint Brush Co. Sydney. He started his television career at QTV9 in Melbourne and I worked with him when he was an editor at AATV Melbourne. In Sydney, he was the first operator of the Quantel Harry system and assisted by the challenge of 3D animation he has shown a natural blend of creativity and an understanding of the technology. While he owes much to the other experienced computer graphics people at VPB, the iconic ABC glass logo has been his biggest project.

The previous computer animation piece by The Video Paint Brush Co. for the ABC was the 'master' dissertation on a background of bright animated graphic shapes on black. Unfortunately it doesn't fit in with the new image although it is still an attractive and clever piece of computer animation.

The computer 'models' for the background were the last job that Sally Pryor did before she left to go to Integrated Amsat, and that was one of the first jobs that Chris Godfrey did as three-dimensional designer at VPB. Terry Dyer was the designer at the ABC, and with input from VPB designer Ian Thompson the end result was put together over three weeks.

I began a discussion with Godfrey by asking him to compare what was available in Australian computer graphics and the relative strengths of the systems. The Video Paint Brush Co. has a number of IRIX workstations made by US company Silicon Systems. Like most computers, the hardware is rigid in what it can do; remember, it needs software to make it do anything and good software to help the designers achieve their objective.

"XYZzap, who did the Nine logo, have been writing their

own software from day one. This has been an advantage in that they have absolute control over each job but it means that each time they have to start from scratch or find some way to link a number of different existing bits together. VPB chose a different approach, with Wavefront software running on the IRIX."

Wavefront Technologies² is a Santa Barbara company that about six months ago bought all the software developed by Bob Abel, one of the pioneers in computer-controlled motion graphics on film and pure three-dimensional computer graphics. The company sells a graphics software program package that is an "open architecture system" where the clients can write in their own software sections. The basis of this is a Model/Preview/Render system. You 'model' the shape, put it into preview to examine it and then use their rendering program to render it. It is in with all the surface details, light and shade etc.

"The variables that we have," Godfrey said, "are that we can get in 'shell' commands to refer back to channels in the preview files. We can select colours, animate interpolation between different models so that we can do shape changes over a particular time. We can even get into the rendering now which is quite amazing. Jan McCormack in our Melbourne office has just written a new program for us. Jan did a computer course at Melbourne University, four years of computer graphics, which is great because Synthesis used to be the only course available and even that was lightweight. Brian Curtis, who is one of the computer engineers at The Video Paintbrush Co. Sydney was a lecturer at that first Swinburne course."

OPENING THE ARCHITECTURE

"The good part about the open architecture system is that we have variables that we can write in and substitute. After each frame is rendered we can now automatically enter a new set of variables so that we can push and prod the system a little harder. Of the other systems — Alias, Veritas, and Synthesis — only Synthesis gives you more of the open feel where you can actually interpolate between objects, animate lights and change their direction, their level and intensity, make them a spot or not etc."

"We've also found that there are a lot of things that you can do like put in negative lights which give the effect of giving you black highlights. One of the projects we are working on in Melbourne at the moment is for Strömberg and because they're little round dollies, we are actually going to focus black lights onto the floor which gives the effect of shadows. Normally we would have to do a version of the picture with just the shadows, a shadow roll and then make the object over the top."

BEYOND THE SURFACE OF THINGS

To add texture and surface details to the moving three-dimensional image VPB has developed some very clever techniques that save computer time and allow a greater visual complexity. For example, if a surface is going to be timber-grained, then a piece of wood or reference photo might be scanned into the Paintbox and reprojected or modified by the paint system until the designer is happy with the colours and textures. This lets surface with its own



END HERE The ABC's eye when symbol takes shape in two stages

shadows and highlights is then transferred to the PDS minicomputer that does the three-dimensional translation.

Godfrey explains, "We have a grid in the Quantel Paintbox that we can grab and that frame is then translated into a file that can be used by the computer system. It's called an RLE (Run Length Encoded) image file. Whereas the Paintbox computer needs to address each pixel (the smallest image point) in a frame individually, if the screen was black then it would say pixel one is black, pixel two is black, pixel three is... etc., with an RLE image you can say the next frame is 20,000 pixels by black. This takes a bit longer to read in and out but is much faster to manipulate."

BUMP IN THE LIGHT

This image is still a 3D texture and to make it behave in depth, VPB has two methods, known as "bump" and colour texture mapping. Basically they involve taking the image of the textured surface and sticking it on a flat surface of the computer model or stretching it, wrapping it around curves etc. Once it's attached to each of these texture formats, when the whole thing moves the texture follows.

There are other things that can be done to make it even more realistic. "Bump texture" adds the changes in video luminance and uses the basic rule that the angle of incidence equals the angle of reflection and gives shading over the particular polygon (The computer uses a system of discrete geometric shapes to make up an image and computes where each of these move from frame to frame. This is how it simulates where highlights and shadows would be as an object moves.)

This makes an object that is really just flat have a shading

of light on it when turned on or off. It is also affected by other lights and reflections in the scene. VPB also has a "bump multiplier" which really deepens, softens or sharpens up the effect.

GLASSY-EYED

The Shader function within the Wavefront software is basically for transparency — the higher the luminance level the more opaque it looks and the lower the more transparent. Godfrey said,

"The problem with glass is that if you have a stationary highlight and a glass vase is turning around, where the glass gets to is zero transparency then the highlight won't show up. There is nothing there to see it in. So that's why we had such a hard time doing the ABC logo in glass. We had agreed to do the job and we were waiting on a software update from the States that would handle glass and it didn't arrive until early January. We've since written our own in Melbourne because we found we could do it better."

"The ABC glass is a Wavefront glass plus. Imagine a scale of zero to one, and you drop the transparency down to about .1. Once you do that any highlights you put on it go very dark and muddy. So the new glass program allows everything to remain fully transparent apart from the highlights. If you hold a piece of glass in a black room with one light on it all you can see is the highlight. We made a very light busy reflective map and placed it over the transparent object, then the highlights were added on top again. We found that to maintain the glass look of it we had to make the bevelled edges quite dark but fully opaque."

While the actual animation of the logo only took Godfrey

about three hours, the job took a little over a month and a half. The rendering times were very long because they were going to assemble the glass logo over different backgrounds on "Harry" (See the article on the Quantel "Harry" fully digital editing studio system in Cinema Papers 51 January 1987.) To do this they needed to make matte shapes that were different from anything they had worked with.

Godfrey explained that they ended up with a full animation of a completely opaque matte, so positive the glass look was the solid bevels, another bevel run to key over, then a highlight run. All these were combined on Harry and the employees that without it the job wouldn't have looked half as good. Godfrey has the advantage of having been an editor and using a lot of means and Harry he knows what will and won't pay.

By this time Dave Patton had already made up the backgrounds and had approved the look of the logo. Once it was in Harry's digital store the long process of assembling the levels began. The digital key system is Harry is very down and flexible and allows multiple layers to be assembled without the usual generation loss of videotape. Combined with the disk drive storage of Harry, VPB has the first of the two Sony digital VTRs in the country, allowing almost any length of program to be stored and replayed.

"The process is complicated; if you have any experience of film optics then the procedure has direct analogies, yet it all has the immediacy of video. "We started," Godfrey said, "by clearing our matte roll and ball laying it in black to make a shadow roll for the logo. Once we had that we blew the result up by 4 per cent and then took our matte roll and

keyed our enlarged result plus the shadow back into our original. This gave us an expanded centre place that made it look like we were getting reflection through the glass with a shadow drop on it. (We had eliminated the more conventional glass approach of ray tracing as being too expensive in our initial planning.)

"We then chose a colour from the background that they were going over, and we keyed the logo over the total background using that colour which gave it a total tint that made it feel as if it was picking up the background colour. We then keyed the highlights back into it to give it the hot spots, keyed our bevel roll and, as top of everything else, added a slight red or blue tint over that bevel to make it more glassy. And we did that for 15 versions. The first one took about two days of playing around to reach the right formula and now we can produce further versions fairly quickly."

Godfrey thinks the main advantage of VPB's ABC work is "that you won't see the same one every day, so it doesn't wear out. In order of what's on air now, I like ours, then XYZ's Channel Nine (it which has enormous strength) the attention to detail, the colour range and everything is superb. I think they did some ray tracing which you see in the bars that move across. They have multiple versions but they are only different in reflections of the towns that they are for. The strength of Dave Patton's design is that each of the ABC's is different."

"I think it's important that people realise that it's not just a computer thing and that it's pretty rounded. If you have a look at things that look like computers, like Channel 10's, well... Computers are still not good enough to give you



FOUR OF A KIND: The ABC logo

the clients in reality. It's still pushing a large boulder up a big hill."

REFLECTING THE FUTURE

"At SIGGRAPH [the US showcase of computer graphics and related hardware] last year I saw a lot of the advance software for the systems and one of the trends is to add a lot of movement things. You can do it, for example, the center of a ball and then change the center of mass so that as it rolls it wobbles. It is a very hard thing to animate out of your own mind, but it points the way that most computer animation is heading: towards what they are calling 'procedural animation'."

"An example is a short animation piece called *Red's Dream* made by Pixar [the George Lucas-owned computer graphic facility in the US]. It is about a small weevils. The animator will dictate the movements of the bug in terms of backwards and forwards, back a little bit, forward a bit and so on or someone balancing on it. The new animation process will then handle the movement of the wheel, its rotation, the wheels etc. This is the way we will start going, where you can add things like the effect of gravity so that you can 'throw' an object straight ahead and deal in the amount of 'gravity' you want and it will fall at that rate. We are hoping that the new major release of Wavefront software that is due in a few months will have that sort of thing in it, but no one is saying."

THE AUSTRALIAN DILEMMA OF JOBS FOR THE REEL

WPS admits that having its own R&D department is expensive, and it must be hard to get value from just the image department presents to outside clients. It does, however, give the company the chance to say to clients, if you come up with a particular concept then they can write the software to make it work. Godfrey agrees. "This is heavily cost-related but it's much better than walking into the Bosch system and asking 'Can you do this?' and having to say no. That's the end of the conversation."

It is the same with everybody, software development is expensive,

even the overseas companies are still doing jobs for the demo reel. Computer graphics is one of the areas of production where you must do jobs like the station IDs that have high prominence to potential clients. Perhaps if you were in America subcontracting keyjobs might pay off because the market is just so much bigger. Here, if we lose two jobs like Channel 7 and Channel 10 to production companies out of the country, it's criminal. It won't help the American research and development and it's certainly not helping us here. And from what I can see, the results are particularly bland—a year of the Seven and X logos and I'll be quite bored."

We originally started off our loss offer with computers by saying that this was "Computer Animation". A slightly different thing to computer graphics and somewhere along the way we lost, but are now returning to "Animation". As Godfrey said, "Everyone is finding that their systems can do the giz, and now it's more a matter of the subtleties of moving the object, which is what animation is really about. If you've got a stick figure that is well animated it's a lot better than a logo that falls flat on its back, no matter how pretty it is. We are trying to blend that into our search for the look rather than the technique. It is the design that will eventually win out."

FOOTNOTES

1. *Disappoint* Vaid Neil March 1986 "Right Now Identified" by Dennis Anderson.
2. Bob Pryor and Andrew Quinn were the hosts of the first course in Computer Graphics offered in Australia at Melbourne College in Melbourne. They were both promptly offered jobs at Creative Cam, a top US computer graphics facility, and they went there to teach in Australia. They set a lot of the computer style of WPS in the early years and are now both working at a Disappoint computer project for a company called Integrated Arts. The parallel processing computer will apparently integrate real time video editing and computer graphics.
3. Glen Godfrey read further on their new technology with Wavefront Technologies. We use a beta release called Wavefront Technologies Wavefront as the best of a available launch. It's a hard thing to do computer graphics at any time. They are finally getting protection of their source code. If we could open that up we could be changing things to and our own applications much more, but it's far that they protect their investment in writing it. We have talked about various beta to beta series of our software developments and have helped them with a couple of programs such as the 3D line drawing. This allows a WPS computer-generated image to be output to a high resolution frame.

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THE LAST MOMENT

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|-----------|--|-----------|---|
| 1 | 1976 Ken Kesey's <i>Lulu</i> , Sunday for the Fair family production, opening Sydney Film Festival, State Theatre | 17 | 1987 Glenn Davis' <i>The Audacious Hours</i> : a key work of Minnesota's Cinema School; alternative director's movement premiere, \$1,400 Price |
| 2 | 1988 Lolo Ronger, animator usually with wife, Patricia (The Invention Of Pecos Archery, 1988) born, Berlin | 18 | 1983 Paolo Armistano, top Italian star who appeared in many Hollywood and Euro-popeo films, succumbed to LUCA-related Cytoma, which he had been warned with legal cancer |
| 3 | 1982 Australian Film Ltd goes into liquidation One-sound Productions Ltd formed to take over film-making activities, and British Group, Films Ltd formed to handle distribution | 19 | 1948 John Dugan, director (<i>The Bear My Room</i> , 1949) born, Hastings, West Hampshire |
| 4 | 1991 Gordon Green, director of photography (<i>The Wet Land</i> , 1990) <i>The Jewel Sea</i> 1993) born London | 20 | 1909 Errol Flynn First Lady Franklin D. Roosevelt's son Robert Roosevelt |
| 5 | 1988 Walter Plunkett, costume designer (<i>Sagaparche</i> , 1988) <i>Gone With The Wind</i> 1939), born Oakland, California | 21 | 1983 Original and only negative of von Sternberg's <i>A Woman Of The Sea</i> also Squeals in the Sea Coll (1935) which was shown once but never officially released because it was made of watercolor! The film was exempt by its producer Charles Chaplin to launch his Paramount as a dramatic actress |
| 6 | 1980 Park Film Productions announced it will cease film production, blaming high interest rates and rising inflation | 22 | 1908 Buddy Adler, producer, co-wrote Field of 7500 Century Film (born New York City) |
| 7 | 1988 Judy Melville (<i>Judy</i>) Toured with New York | 23 | 1976 Dennis Price (<i>Dennis Price</i>) born, Farnley, John Price) born, Telford, England |
| 8 | 1983 Bo Gunnar Weibergsten director (<i>Alvina Modig</i> , 1983) born, Halmstad, Sweden | 24 | 1908 Claude Chabrol dies of both films |
| 9 | 1987 Ted Dwyer's only feature film <i>The Big Bad Wolf</i> premieres at Wild Organized Theater, Boston | 25 | 1987 MGM's <i>Captains Courageous</i> starring Spencer Tracy and Freddie Bartholomew released |
| 10 | 1983 Warner Bros. President Richard Goodson died of heart failure induced by drug abuse in his Munich flat | 26 | 1916 Douglas Fairbanks signs 10-year contract with MGM Film Corporation launching his film career |
| 11 | 1988 Sherman Goble's screenplay <i>I Am A Fugitive From A Chain Gang</i> , 1932 <i>The Story Of Louis Pasteur</i> 1936) born New York City | 27 | 1933 Eugene Leuze is writer who developed and perfected Edison's Kinescope and Decca's Biogon projector, dies USA |
| 12 | Norma Smoot's dies Blood and Hell, California | 28 | 1909 Eric Ambler novelist and occasional screenwriter (<i>The Man About The House</i> 1944 — from playing <i>The Jewel Sea</i> 1953) born London |
| 13 | 1933 Actor Cij Osada (Hiroshima Mon Amour, 1933) <i>The Light American</i> 1983) born Japan | 29 | 1987 Jayne Mansfield (Jeanette Aronson) killed in automobile accident, near New Orleans |
| 14 | 1983 Cliff Swenson, folk singer (<i>Upjohn</i>) film festival dies at voice of Jimmy Crabtree in Disney's <i>Pearlman</i> (1984) 1915-1983 Missouri | 30 | 1983 Varoujan Harizadecian Publisher, founder of Soviet giant cinema, dies, Age 68 |
| 15 | 1917 Al Leah La Rue star of low-budget features in which she used a five-minute balletstep as a weapon, born, Michigan | | |
| 16 | 1908 Arthur Orl Murnau born in Germany as Adolf Murnau in 1908 He died (1989) born Portland Oregon | | |



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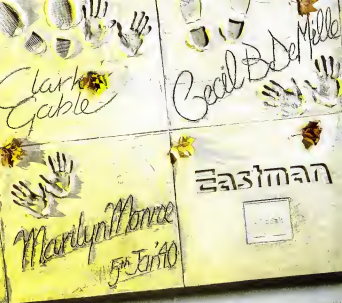
THE MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER II



Kelch Wagstaff: Director of Photography

Geoff Burrow: Director and Producer


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